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Alta bets on 2014 bike-share launch

On track? Supplier says its service is running without interruption despite Bixi bankruptcy

EMILY JACKSON
emily.jackson@metronews.ca

Its bicycle supplier went belly up, but the company chosen to operate Vancouver's bike share is still confident the system could launch in 2014.

"Alta Bicycle Share is confident they will launch all 2014 systems as planned," said Alta spokeswoman Leslie Carlson in an email Thursday in response to questions about bike supplier Bixi's bankruptcy. "Vancouver bike share is tentatively scheduled for 2014."

This statement comes as city officials predict the launch will be delayed until early 2015 as they have yet to hammer out a contract with Alta, which the city picked as the bike-share supplier over five other applicants in summer 2013.

Bixi bikes are seen in Toronto. Portland-based Alta, the company chosen to run Vancouver's public bike share, says it's confident that it will launch in 2014, despite the bankruptcy of its Montreal-based partner Bixi. HANNAH ZITNER/METRO FILE

"At this point things are in limbo until (Alta) re-establishes something with Bixi or another provider," Mayor Gregor Robertson said to reporters at an event Thursday. "We don't have any financial commitment to date."

Robertson still hopes to build a bike share as a form of public transportation, as city council has already earmarked $6 million for the project.

"We've gone slow on this to make sure we get the right financial model with it," Robertson said, noting there have been troubles in many of the other 500 cities with bike shares.

"All public transportation comes with some public subsidies, but it takes pressure off the transit system, it takes people out of cars."

For its part, Bixi said it is business as usual as its receiver tries to restructure the heavily indebted business.

Alta's spokeswoman also said its service continues to operate without interruption.

"We are continuing to communicate with Bixi and our bicycle supplier, DeVinci, as we normally do," Carlson said.

Restructuring is a common option for businesses with financial and operational troubles, Carlson added.

"Just as airlines and car companies have operated under similar legal protection in the past and continued to serve customers, Bixi will as well," she said.

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TransLink

NDP: Put the brakes on transit referendum

The Liberals have fallen asleep at the wheel of the transit referendum, the NDP's TransLink critic says.

George Heyman, MLA for Vancouver-Fairview, is calling for the government to delay rolling out the referendum during November's municipal elections after Transportation Minister Todd Stone reiterated Thursday the contentious vote will happen, and that legislation to that effect will be introduced in the spring session of the Legislature.

"We still don't know what form the question will take," said Heyman. "There's not enough time for voters to make an informed decision. At the very least, they should delay it."

Stone called for mayors to come up with a unified vision for the region's transit system before settling on a question that can be posed to voters.

But Heyman says the mayors have been unified throughout the process, and presented a clear direction in TransLink's 2012 Moving Forward strategic plan that the province ultimately rejected.

Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson wasn't happy about Thursday's comments from Stone.

"It's been really disappointing and frustrating for us to see the B.C. government kind of attacking mayors when we've been very clear on our priorities and our support for transit in the region," he said. "We don't know what's going to happen with the referendum … there's no real information from the province."

Earlier this week, TransLink Mayor's Council chair Richard Walton warned that time for public engagement is running out.

METRO/WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

Premier Christy Clark, pictured in her downtown Vancouver office on Thursday, says the fall referendum on TransLink funding will happen, whether mayors participate in it or not. KATE WEBB/METRO

Transit referendum or game of chicken?

Premier vs. Mayors.
Refusal to write question prompts Clark to offer ultimatum

KATE WEBB
kate.webb@metronews.ca

Write it, or we'll write it for you.

That was the message Premier Christy Clark had for Metro Vancouver mayors Thursday when reporters hammered her with questions about the unwritten transit referendum question she has vowed to put to voters on Nov. 15.

The mayors have steadfastly refused to consider writing the question for a referendum they say they can't win in such a short time frame, and argued it's the province's job to write it since it is Clark's initiative in the first place.

But Clark had a different take.

"They mayors, I think, have the strongest interest in formulating the question because they're the ones that are going to benefit from, potentially, a new source of funding, which is what they've been asking for for a long, long time," she told media during a press conference that was supposed to be about the Lunar New Year.

"I appreciate they've had difficulty agreeing in the past, but I hope that this would really provide them with the motivation that they need to find some agreement on it.

"If they don't, there will still be a referendum question on the ballot, and it just seems to me like mayors have the strongest interest in helping formulate that question."

As Metro reported on Wednesday, the mayors unanimously deny they have been anything but united in their calls for new revenue streams to fund infrastructure expansions such as a rapid transit line to UBC and new rail lines in Surrey.

Since 2007 they have passed a gas tax hike, and asked the province to enact a vehicle levy, road pricing, a regional sales tax, or give TransLink a portion of carbon tax revenues, but were rejected by the province each and every time.

The mayors have also been calling for a governance overhaul to return the corporate TransLink board, which is responsible for major decisions on spending and priorities, to being an elected body, as it was before 2007.

Pressed on whether that overhaul could be introduced as legislation in the upcoming spring legislative session, Clark said it's possible but she can't guarantee it.

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Construction starts on much needed Vancouver office space

Credit Suisse. Analysts say vacancy rates for office space are among lowest in North America

Vancouver's newest tower will bring much needed office space and 31 storeys of flair to the city's financial district.

The $200-million Credit Suisse tower at Howe and Pender was celebrated for both its high green standards and its restoration of the old stock exchange at its ceremonial groundbreaking Thursday.

It will be the second tallest LEED Platinum office tower in Canada and the first LEED Platinum conversion of a historic building. (The stock exchange, built in 1929, will keep its façade.)

It's crucial to keep building commercial space so people can work near home, Mayor Gregor Robertson said.

Vacancy rates for the city's office space are among the lowest in North America, according to industry analysts, and tenants are starting to want to move from dated buildings.

Council has approved as much office space in the last four years — there are 16 projects under construction with up to 16 more on the way — as it did in the previous decade, Robertson said, lauding this particular project for its green standards.

"Our green brand is big on the world stage and it's important we keep advancing that," he said.

While no one has signed up as the main tenant yet, "the race is on" to get the best floor space, said CBRE CEO Mark Renzoni, the broker for the development.

Demand is rising for sustainable, newer buildings with more glass, better lighting and amenities that give businesses a "competitive edge," Renzoni said. "Tenants want alternatives." EMILY JACKSON/METRO

Officials break ground at the $200-million Credit Suisse office tower in Vancouver's financial district on Thursday. EMILY JACKSON/METRO

Publication ban lifted on young Szendrei killer

Laura Szendrei FACEBOOK

The name of a young man who was sentenced as an adult for bludgeoning a 15-year-old girl to death in a suburban park near Vancouver is no longer covered by a publication ban.

Wyatt DeBruin, 21, pleaded guilty to killing Laura Szendrei in a park in Delta in September 2010.

He was sentenced last fall to life in prison for his crime, as a judge condemned him for not only devastating Szendrei's family and friends, but also striking "enduring fear into the heart of every Delta parent."

DeBruin was just days short of his 18th birthday at the time of the killing, meaning his name was covered by a publication ban as a young offender.

An adult sentence would usually lift such a ban, but his lawyer applied for an extension.

On Thursday, the restriction was lifted, though a publication ban remains in place on photos of the man, his lawyer, Donna Turko, confirmed. Turko said keeping DeBruin's picture out of the media would ensure he is safe in prison while helping him move on with his life.

"For his ability to access programming, to try to improve his mental status and state, his understanding of the offence, it will be much easier in the system to get him that help without the worry of a constant threat," she said an interview.

Turko said it was difficult to predict whether the publication of DeBruin's name would affect his chances of rehabilitation.

"It will be up to the intelligence of corrections to make sure they've got him somewhere that allows for his rehabilitation and his safety."

DeBruin was sentenced last year to life with no parole for at least seven years, but his parole eligibility was reduced by the two years and eight months he had already spent in custody.

Szendrei was walking through Delta's popular Mackie Park to meet friends on Sept. 25, 2010 when she was attacked. Her friends heard her scream and rushed to her side.

They found Szendrei beaten so severely that she died the following morning in hospital.

DeBruin was arrested five months later, after an undercover operation ended with him confessing.

During his sentencing hearing, the court heard DeBruin left home on the morning of the murder, carrying plastic cable ties and a metal pipe. His plan was to find someone to rape, though he had no particular victim in mind. Szendrei just happened to be the first person he ran into who was by herself. The court heard DeBruin asked Szendrei to help him fix his bike. He then tried to wrap a plastic wrap around her neck, but Szendrei screamed and attempted to run away, so he hit her over the head several times with the pipe. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Medical marijuana site

Alleged unauthorized grow-op seized

West Vancouver Police raided a medical marijuana grow site and discovered an alleged illegal grow-op with more than 800 plants.

Police were called to a home in the 4600 block of Woodgreen Drive home after reports of a gas odour coming from the house, said Const. Jeff Palmer in a release.

"The home was authorized for previously under the Health Canada authorizations ... for 161 plants," he said.

Investigators seized 810 suspected marijuana plants and another 62 ounces of suspected marijuana.

The street value of the seized drugs and plants could range as high as $244,000, police said.

SINDHU DHARMARAJAH/FOR METRO

Lions Gate Bridge

Driver charged with electronics use

A man driving while using a cellphone is being blamed for a head-on collision last month on the Lions Gate Bridge.

Two charges, including using an electronic device while driving, have been laid against a 28-year-old man who sustained serious injuries and continues to recover.

West Vancouver police were called to the bridge shortly after 8 a.m. on Dec. 3 after a sedan crossed the centre lane and collided with an SUV. A North Vancouver husband and wife, both 35, were taken to hospital for observation.

In a press release, police noted the charge was based on witness statements and collision analysis. They also noted that there is no evidence that calls or text messages were sent or received at the time of the crash.

SINDHU DHARMARAJAH/FOR METRO

Seeing better days

Forfeited drug SUV gets new life

The province is providing a forfeited SUV to the B.C.'s gang squad to use as a rolling billboard campaign against gangster life.

For the next two years, the SUV, which has been wrapped with graphics and messages, will be cruising around the Lower Mainland to engage the public at schools and community events with the message "end gang life."

"This vehicle's history and bold graphics will help the CFSEU-BC engage youth," said Dan Malo, CFSEU-BC chief superintendent, in a statement. "Gang life does not pay, and when you get involved with gangs you risk everything."

CFSEU-BC unveiled the forfeited 2009 BMW X5 SUV, from the civil forfeiture program, at Rogers Arena Thursday night.

SINDHU DHARMARAJAH/FOR METRO

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Forte 5X shown △

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$76 bi-weekly payments include the $640 Throwback Pricing Incentive. Payments are based on 2014 Forte LX MT (FO541E). After 15 months, bi-weekly payments increase to $96. Throwback pricing incentive may be taken as a lump sum or to reduce the financed amount.*

Rio SX with Navigation shown △

THE NEW 2014 RIO SEDAN — hwy / city 100km ^ 5.3L/7.5L

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No ‘real concerns’ with Point Grey Road closure: Mayor

Kitsilano. Higher speed limit on 4th Ave. allows diverted cars to move faster: Robertson

EMILY JACKSON
emily.jackson@metronews.ca

Traffic seems to be flowing well in Kitsilano despite concerns over diverting vehicles from an oceanfront road that was closed to commuter cars last weekend.

“As with previous bike lane changes there was a lot of hand wringing, but everything is going fine so far,” Mayor Gregor Robertson said to reporters on Thursday regarding the closure of Point Grey Road between Macdonald and Alma streets.

Neighbours were especially concerned the 10,000 cars forced to divert along Macdonald would clog that residential street along with 4th Avenue, but Robertson said traffic is flowing well.

“So far I’m not hearing any real concerns,” Robertson said, noting people can drive faster on 4th Avenue as it has a higher speed limit than Point Grey Road.

The engineering department is tracking travel times and collecting data to determine if there are issues.

While some residents love the changes that encourage cycling and walking, others are still upset with the closure. They held a protest on Monday where many accused the city of creating an enclave for rich homeowners on the seaside strip.

NPA Coun. George Affleck even pledged that his party will re-open the road to cars should they win a mandate in the November civic election.

But the city stands by its goal, which was to connect the False Creek seawall to the western beaches with a safe greenway for pedestrians and cyclists. The project will cost $6 million.

Rough road ahead

“It’ll be some days or weeks before everything is back to smooth completely.” Gregor Robertson

Point Grey Road has been blocked off to commuting cars and will become a seaside greenway. EMILY JACKSON/METRO FILE

Transgender pageant queen Jenna Talackova posing with her new PETA ad at the corner of Davie and Bute streets. SINDHU DHARMARAJAH/METRO

Talackova shows some skin for PETA

Transgender pageant queen Jenna Talackova traded in her glitz and tiara for a more organic look at the unveiling of her new PETA ad on Thursday.

The first transgender woman to compete for the Miss Universe title wore a revealing bikini made entirely out of vegetables in an ad that she unveiled at the Davie Village rainbow crosswalk. The poster claims that her “healthiest transformation” was going vegan.

“I really care for animals, and I studied holistic nutrition, so going vegan and adopting a healthy diet was just part of who I am,” said Talackova, 25. “When I was offered the chance to do something like this for a cause that is so dear to my heart, I jumped at it.”

The diet is not as hard as it seems, she said, encouraging her fans to go on a trial vegan diet to protect animals.

Brave New Girls

See footage from the photo shoot in the second episode on Sunday at 7 p.m.

“I hope this (ad) just shines more awareness even though I’m in my birthday suit,” she added.

The Vancouver native also has a new reality show, Brave New Girls, airing Sundays on E!.

Brave New Girls follows Talackova as she moves from Vancouver to Toronto to pursue her modelling career.

“I think the show is something that Canada needs ... I think it’s really opening up the general public’s eyes to the LGBT community and myself and it’s kind of making it more socially acceptable.”

SINDHU DHARMARAJAH/FOR METRO

Felony harassment

B.C. journalist charged after threatening her boyfriend’s life

A 25-year-old freelance journalist from British Columbia was formally charged on Thursday with a felony, five days after she was arrested in the United States over allegations she threatened to kill her hockey-player boyfriend.

Tieja MacLaughlin, who has worked for several media outlets in Kelowna, was charged with one count of felony harassment, according to court documents. She remained in custody, with bail set at $50,000, and she was scheduled to appear in court in Kennewick, Wash., on Friday.

She is alleged to have threatened Jackson Playfair, a 19-year-old junior hockey player on the Tri-City Americans, who she had been dating since last summer, according to the documents. The charge includes a domestic violence allegation because they were in a relationship at the time.

None of the allegations have been tested in court, and police documents and court records indicate MacLaughlin denied threatening to kill Playfair when questioned by officers.

A prosecutor filed an affidavit with the Benton and Franklin Counties Superior Court on Thursday, offering new details about the allegations against MacLaughlin, some of which contradict earlier reports from Kennewick Police Department.

According to the affidavit, prepared by prosecuting attorney Brendan Siefken, MacLaughlin and Playfair had been in an “on again, off again” relationship since the summer of last year.

The affidavit says MacLaughlin was in Kelowna late last week, planning to visit Playfair in Kennewick that weekend, when Playfair disclosed during a phone call that he had cheated on MacLaughlin.

“The defendant became upset and began to make verbal threats towards him,” says the affidavit, which contains unproven allegations.

“She advised him that by tomorrow night, he would be dead ...”

Playfair told MacLaughlin not to visit Kennewick as planned, the document says. But the affidavit alleges MacLaughlin persisted.

“The defendant advised that she was coming down that day and that he did not have a choice, and that he needed to have things figured out or things were going to get very bad,” the affidavit alleges.

The following morning, Playfair received additional messages from MacLaughlin indicating she was at the border and on her way to Kennewick, the documents allege. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Justin Bieber arrested in Miami, charged with DUI

Hard to Belieb. A bratty teen pop star, alcohol, drugs, a yellow Lamborghini — what could go wrong?

So what could happen?

For a first DUI offence, there is no minimum sentence and a maximum of six months, a fine of up to $500, and 50 hours of community service.

When he debuted five years ago, Justin Bieber was a mop-haired heartthrob, clean cut and charming. But a series of troubling incidents have put his innocent image at risk, and none more so than his arrest on DUI charges Thursday.

Police say they arrested a bleary-eyed Bieber — smelling of alcohol — after officers saw him drag-racing before dawn on a residential street, his yellow Lamborghini travelling at nearly twice the speed limit.

The 19-year-old singer later admitted smoking marijuana, drinking and taking a prescription medication, police say. Unlike previous dustups, this arrest has him facing potential jail time.

Bieber was charged with DUI, driving with an expired licence and resisting arrest without violence. His Miami-Dade County jail mug shot showed the singer smiling in a bright red inmate jumpsuit, his hair still stylishly coiffed.

Bieber made his initial court appearance via a video link from jail. Bieber's bond was set at $2,500.

Bieber left jail about an hour after his court appearance, popping through a window of his black SUV in a black hoodie and sunglasses to wave to crowds of reporters and young girls waiting to see him.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

This police booking mug shot shows Canadian pop star Justin Bieber on Thursday. Bieber was arrested for allegedly drag-racing on a Miami Beach street. Police say Bieber has been charged with resisting arrest without violence in addition to drag racing and DUI. MIAMI-DADE COUNTY JAIL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Going down? Diners bored while waiting on Ford, who was stuck between floors

Toronto Mayor Rob Ford arrived more than an hour late for a lunch-hour speech to the Economic Club of Canada today, saying he had been stuck in an elevator for 45 minutes.

The president and CEO of the club said she was trapped in the same elevator with Ford. Rhiannon Traill said the group took a freight elevator to "avoid all the traffic" in the lobby.

Ford was "so calm and gracious" during the ordeal, Traill said, noting they discussed his speech and his campaign for re-election.

"Unfortunately, we were stuck in between floors so they couldn't get us out for a while," she said.

Despite their best efforts, the group wasn't able to alert event organizers of the reason for the delay, Traill said.

The mayor himself would not elaborate on what happened.

Several members of the business crowd left before Ford's arrival, with one saying he had too much work to do and couldn't wait any longer.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Belgium

Dine-and-dasher discovered done-in

Authorities are investigating the death of a gastronomic freeloader as a possible murder. Two days after the father of Titus Clarysse found him dead in his apartment, investigators were looking Thursday for suspects in what a spokesperson called "a case of murder or manslaughter."

Clarysse was famed in and around the town of Ghent for walking into any restaurant of his choosing, ordering anything from steak to lobsters and walking out without paying.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

From Loose Change to Luxe:

How to do Dine Out™ on a budget and in style

Vancouver, BC

Part 2: Luxe

For some, money is no object – especially when it comes to food. Suffice it to say, Vancouverites love to eat and drink, and with a plethora of restaurants, locally sourced and sustainable ingredients, great B.C. VQA wines, amazing cocktails, local craft brews and a huge multicultural influence making Vancouver's dining scene one of the best in the world, it's no wonder.

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If you want to go all out, here's some food for thought, pardon the pun. Your sample itinerary might start with a Friday afternoon food and photo tour of Vancouver's Railtown district on the Food-tography: A culinary Photography Tour ($65*). You'll be done by 4pm, just in time to go back to your hotel for a quick refresher before dinner. Hotel for two nights: $276**. Later, hop aboard the Secret Supper Soiree ($129*). It's a culinary road-trip like no other. Saturday, it's off on another culinary tour of East Van on the Craft Brew & Culinary Tour ($65*). Dinner that night is at West ($38*). Impress your date by splurging on that special bottle of BC VQA wine ($50). Sunday morning, sleep in… then it's over to the West End for the West End Brunch Crawl ($40)*. Total foodie weekend with accommodation: $500.00*. Eating to your heart's content: delicious.

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LUCAS PAVAN / FOR TOURISM VANCOUVER

Controversial proposal. Feds push new Canada Jobs Grant package

The federal government has offered the provinces and territories a new Canada Jobs Grant package as part of a "sensitive" third round of negotiations over the controversial proposal, says Employment Minister Jason Kenney.

The original proposal, which came shortly after the last federal budget was introduced, was less than perfect, Kenney acknowledged Thursday as he described a new offer that offers additional "flexibilities" to the provinces.

"I'm not suggesting the initial model that we proposed was ideal; to the contrary," the minister said in a speech to the Toronto Region Board of Trade.

At the same time, however, he expressed frustration with the fact other levels of government have been balking at something that he considers to be a common sense plan.

"It's so blindingly sensible, I don't understand why it's not widely accepted."

The main idea behind the job grant scheme remains intact as the talks enter the latest phase, Kenney said: giving those who create jobs more say over how tax dollars are spent on training programs.

The Canada Jobs Grant model, first proposed by the Harper government in last year's federal budget, was supposed to be in place by April, but several provinces objected because it would have meant an overall cut to federal funding for job training.

Ontario Training Minister Brad Duguid said earlier this week that he remains opposed to the fact that Ottawa intends to finance its share of the program by reducing transfer payments to the provinces.

The original plan was to create a $15,000 grant that Canadians could use to receive training for a specific job opening.

Kenney stressed that Canada is already short of skilled workers, and the pending retirement of thousands more across the country as the baby boomers retire will only make matters worse unless the right job training programs are in place.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Alberta

Supreme Court won't hear appeal of man who hoped to save rabbits

The Supreme Court of Canada won't hear an appeal from a nature lover who tried to save the rabbits of Canmore, Alta., from a deadly cull.

The town decided several years ago to trap and kill its feral rabbits, which it said were devouring local gardens and attracting predators such as coyotes and even cougars.

Daniel Onischuk, an Edmonton photographer, objected and went to court for an injunction, arguing trapping, sterilizing and relocating the rabbits was a better option.

The Court of Queen's Bench dismissed his suit, saying he had no standing to bring the application since he had no ties or interest in Canmore and the appeal court declined to hear an appeal.

The town began the trap-and-kill program in the fall of 2012.

As usual, the Supreme Court gave no reasons for refusing to hear Onischuk's appeal.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Fatal blaze ravages seniors' home in Quebec town

L'Isle-Verte. Many residents were over 85, and all but a handful were confined to wheelchairs and walkers

Just six months after Canadians were rocked by the Lac-Mégantic tragedy, another Quebec town found itself waiting to learn how many people it had lost after fire ripped through a seniors' residence Thursday.

And just like in Lac-Mégantic, the destruction struck shortly after midnight.

The unsuspecting community this time was L'Isle-Verte, a town of only 1,500 people in Quebec's scenic Lower St. Lawrence.

Provincial police have confirmed that five people are dead and another 30 are missing.

Parts of the Résidence du Havre, which opened in 1997, had sprinklers, while others didn't. The local fire chief said sprinklers did go off, triggering the fire alarm and allowing firefighters to gain access to about one-third of the building.

Thursday's blaze erupted in the old part of the three-storey building, which a Quebec Health Department document from last July states was constructed of wood. The document also says the building had a fire alarm and that each room was equipped with a smoke detector.

Many of the residents were over 85 and all but a handful had limited movement, being confined to wheelchairs and walkers.

Town official Ginette Caron said only five residents in the 52-unit centre were fully mobile.

At least three people were injured, although the extent of their injuries was unclear.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Investigators and firefighters look over the rubble where fire destroyed a seniors' residence in L'Isle-Verte, Que., Thursday. RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

'Unconstitutional'

Virginia AG will no longer defend gay marriage ban

Virginia's attorney general has concluded that the state's ban on gay marriage is unconstitutional and he will no longer defend it in federal lawsuits challenging it, his office said Thursday.

In an email to The Associated Press, Michael Kelly, a spokesman for Attorney General Mark Herring, said the state will instead side with the plaintiffs who are seeking to have the ban struck down.

Herring planned to file a brief Thursday morning with the federal court in Norfolk, where one of the lawsuits is being heard, notifying the court of the state's change in position in the case, Kelly said.

The attorney general decided the ban was unconstitutional after a thorough legal review of the matter, Kelly said.

Virginia has emerged as a critical state in the nationwide fight for gay marriage.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

No sign of stopping

Opportunity rover logs 39 km since landing

The rover Opportunity may not be sleek like a brand new car, but it shows no signs of braking even after a decade on Mars.

Scientists and engineers gathered at the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory Thursday to celebrate the plucky rover, which has logged 24 miles (39 kilometres) since landing.

Opportunity has been exploring the rim of Endeavour Crater, its fifth crater destination. A new study of rocks examined by Opportunity and published in the journal Science found they're the oldest yet — about four billion years old. The rocks interacted with water during a time when environmental conditions were favourable for microbes.

Opportunity outlasted its twin Spirit, which stopped communicating in 2010 after getting stuck in sand. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mark Adler

MP says comment at Western Wall was 'a joke'

Toronto-area MP Mark Adler says he was just joking when he made a crass comment as Prime Minister Stephen Harper visited the Western Wall in Jerusalem.

Adler, situated behind barricades at the sacred site earlier this week, pleaded with one of Harper's aides to let him into the main event.

"It's the re-election! This is the million-dollar shot!" Adler said.

The MP for York Centre scoffed at reporters on Wednesday when he was asked about the comments in Tel Aviv, where Harper was bestowed with an honorary doctorate from the Tel Aviv University.

"You guys don't get a joke, huh? It was all said tongue-in-cheek," Adler said.

The Prime Minister's Office denied Adler was in the doghouse for his remark. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Indian woman says village council ordered gang rape

A 20-year-old Indian woman said she was gang-raped on the orders of a village council because she fell in love with a man from a different ethnic group, police said Thursday.

Twelve suspects and the head of the council have been arrested for the Monday night attack, police said. The woman told police that she lost count of how many men raped her. She was hospitalized Thursday in serious condition.

Television footage showed the woman, her face covered by scarves, being led into a hospital with an IV tube in her arm.

TV news reports said the woman is a member of an ethnic tribal group and the man is a Muslim from a neighbouring village. The man visited the woman's village, Subalpur, on Monday to propose marriage, but was caught by other villagers, and the man and woman were tied to a tree while the village council decided their fate, the reports said.

Men arrested in a gang rape are produced at a court in Bolpur, India Thursday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Police official C. Sudhakar said the village council ordered the man and woman to each pay a fine of 25,000 rupees ($400). The man's family was able to pay, but when the woman's family said they were too poor, the council ordered the gang rape, police said.

A rash of high-profile rapes in India over the past year has sparked widespread outrage over chronic sexual violence and government failures to protect women.

The West Bengal case is particularly troubling because it was allegedly ordered by a council made up of village elders. Such councils are not legally binding in India, but they are seen as the will of the local community. The councils decide on social norms in the village, and in some cases they dictate the way women can dress or who they can marry. Those who flout the councils risk being ostracized.

Subalpur is about 180 kilometres north of Kolkata, the capital of West Bengal.

Annie Raja, general secretary of the National Federation of Indian Women, said that such local councils destroy women's rights.

"They are dead set against giving basic human rights to women," she said. "These are non-constitutional bodies and the West Bengal government should take stringent action against them."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Ukraine opposition urges ceasefire, but protesters still appear defiant

Uneasy truce.
Leaders offer mixed reports of negotiations with president

Opposition leader and former WBC heavyweight boxing champion Vitali Klitschko, centre, addresses protesters near the burning barricades between police and protesters in central Kyiv, Ukraine, Thursday. SERGEI CHUZAVKOV/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A top opposition leader on Thursday urged protesters to maintain a shaky ceasefire with police after at least two demonstrators were killed in clashes this week, but some in the crowd appeared defiant, jeering and chanting "revolution" and "shame."

Emerging from hours-long talks with President Viktor Yanukovych, opposition leader Oleh Tyahnybok asked demonstrators in Kyiv for several more days of a truce, saying the president has agreed to ensure the release of dozens of detained protesters and stop further detentions.

But other opposition leaders offered mixed reports on the outcome of the meeting, with opposition leader Vitali Klitschko saying negotiations had brought little result.

He and Tyahnybok were booed at the barricades by angry demonstrators and the atmosphere appeared tense.

Interior Minister Vitaliy Zakharchenko issued a statement guaranteeing that police would not take action against the large protest camp on Independence Square, known as the Maidan. He also called on the police to exercise calm and not react to provocations.

The developments came as hundreds of enraged protesters in several regions in western Ukraine, where Yanukovych has little support, seized government offices and forced one governor loyal to Yanukovych to resign. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Protests

Rejecting Russian aid

The protests began after Yanukovych turned away from closer ties with the European Union in favour of getting a bailout loan from Russia. They turned violent this week after he pushed through harsh anti-protest laws, rejecting protesters' demands that he resign and call new elections. At least two people were killed by gunfire at the clash site on Wednesday. Demonstrators had pelted riot police with stones and set police buses on fire, while the officers responded with rubber bullets, tear gas and stun grenades. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Iranian president gets spotlight at Davos forum

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani listens to welcome remarks during a session of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, Thursday. MICHEL EULER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In a charm offensive to the global political and business elite, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani set lofty ambitions for his country, including becoming one of the world's top 10 economies.

The first Iranian leader in a decade to visit the World Economic Forum, Rouhani took top billing Thursday, drawing crowds to hear a speech in which he promised greater engagement with the world.

Touting potential investment opportunities of the oil-rich land to the business tycoons in the audience, Rouhani said his country could, with the gradual easing of sanctions, enjoy an economic boom.

And Tehran, he said, is committed to honouring a deal to curb its nuclear program in the hope that will lead to a permanent lifting of economic sanctions, which have battered the Iranian economy over recent years.

"I see the status of Iran pursuing policies of moderation, prudence and hope in the future global economy," said Rouhani. "Iran's economy has so far the potential to be among the world's top 10 in the next three decades."

For 2012, the International Monetary Fund judged Iran to be the 21st biggest economy in the world in terms of annual economic income, or nominal gross domestic product. To get into the top 10 it would have to leapfrog the likes of Switzerland, Turkey and Spain. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Economic sanctions

- Iran has huge riches at its disposal, particularly oil and gas, the workforce is skilled and the country has untapped potential for tourism.
- But the country has largely been cut off from international business since the Iranian Revolution in 1979.

Liftoff!

NASA's newest satellite blasted off into space

NASA has launched an advanced, new communication satellite.

An unmanned rocket blasted off Thursday night from Cape Canaveral with the latest, third-generation Tracking and Data Relay Satellite.

NASA uses the TDRS satellites to support the International Space Station and Hubble Space Telescope, among other craft.

The network is 35,886 kilometres high and allows continuous two-way contact with the space station and its six inhabitants.

This newest satellite is designated L in the TDRS series. NASA will rename it TDRS-12 once it's checked out in orbit by late spring.

The satellite costs about $350 million.

NASA launched its first TDRS in 1983 aboard a space shuttle.

Thursday's liftoff was delayed briefly by a last-minute data dropout with the rocket. Launch controllers worked around the problem. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Civil war in Syria

Harper delivers $100M in aid to Jordan

On the eve of his visit to a Syrian refugee camp in Jordan, Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced an additional $100 million in funding Thursday to help the kingdom deal with an influx of Syrians fleeing their nation's ongoing civil war.

More than 576,000 Syrian refugees are now in Jordan, comprising more than nine per cent of the country's population. Their arrival has strained the kingdom's resources and infrastructure.

Harper is set to visit the Za'atri refugee camp, home to tens of thousands of Syrians, on Friday as part of his first-ever visit to Jordan.

The new Canadian funds will be spent over five years, while another $5 million will be provided to help Jordan mitigate threats posed by Syrian weapons and materials of mass destruction.

Harper's announcement came just three days after he announced $66 million in aid to Palestinians. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Personnel problems

U.S. orders review of nuclear force amid missteps

Citing a string of setbacks in the nuclear missile force, U.S. Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel summoned senior military leaders to discuss serious personnel problems and other missteps that "threaten to jeopardize" public trust.

In a memo Thursday to top Pentagon officials, Hagel also ordered an independent review of the nuclear force to determine whether setbacks, including numerous lapses and missteps revealed by The Associated Press, reflect endemic failures that could harm the nuclear mission and the safety and security of the nation's nuclear weapons.

Last week the Air Force announced it had suspended the security clearances of 34 nuclear missile launch officers who are alleged to have cheated on proficiency tests, a probe that grew out of a drug use investigation.

The Air Force operates, maintains and secures 450 Minuteman 3 intercontinental ballistic missiles, as well as a fleet of nuclear-capable bombers. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Muslim men sleep inside the St. Pierre church where they and hundreds of Muslims sought refuge in Boali, Central African Republic, Thursday. Clashes erupted as thousands of Muslims tried to flee looting of their neighbourhoods on the day of the inauguration of the interim president. JEROME DELAY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CAR leader sworn in amid looting, death threats

Risk of genocide. Tensions flared when hundreds of Christians looted, set fire to Muslim homes and businesses and threatened to go on a killing spree

Interim President Catherine Samba-Panza urged fighters to put down their arms as she took the oath of office Thursday, even as looters pillaged Muslim neighbourhoods and sectarian tensions escalated in the anarchic Central African Republic.

Samba-Panza, the nation's first female leader, was sworn in at a ceremony days after being chosen by a national transitional council. The rebel leader behind the March 2013 coup stepped aside nearly two weeks ago under mounting international criticism of his inability to control his fighters and stem the violence.

In her inaugural address, Samba-Panza urged both Muslim fighters and Christian militiamen to support peace. "I strongly call on the fighters to show patriotism in putting down their weapons," she said. "The ongoing disorder … will no longer be tolerated."

UN officials have warned that the crisis is at high risk of escalating into a genocide in the country with a history of coups and dictatorship.

Christian Bernis Latakpi, 24, a university student, said he hoped that Samba-Panza, would bring much-needed reconciliation after months of bloodshed. "Since independence, men have always run the country and they have failed at the job," he said. "We're looking to her to quickly bring security and to reunite our Muslim and Christian brothers. Because the Muslim Central Africans — they were born here, grew up here and we can't disown them." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Knife hidden in diapers

Mom allegedly kills son in hospital

A Swiss woman detained in Spain and taken to a hospital with her 10-month-old son allegedly cut the boy's throat with a hidden knife and killed him after receiving permission to give him a bath. She allegedly took her son suffering from a brain abnormality without authorization from a specialist clinic. Police said they were taken to the hospital because the boy needed medical attention. She later tried to kill herself. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cairo. Held Egyptian-Canadian journalist may go on trial, family says

An Egyptian-Canadian journalist being held in a notorious Cairo prison is no longer being investigated for links to a terrorist group but could nonetheless be put on trial, his family said Thursday.

After nearly a month behind bars without being charged, Mohamed Fahmy continues to be interrogated on suspicion of using illegal equipment, broadcasting false news and is even facing allegations of transmitting false information to CNN, his former employer.

"This is totally insane," Fahmy's brother Sherif said. "Passing false information is insanity and passing false information to his previous employer is more insanity, so we don't know what is going on."

Fahmy was working for Al-Jazeera English when he and two co-workers were arrested Dec. 29. The conditions of his detention, in a cramped, cold, insect-ridden cell, have been troubling. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Goodfellas, the sequel: Mobster arrested

Crime doesn't pay. Snitch told FBI robbers didn't get their share of 1978 heist loot, court papers show

An elderly reputed mobster was arrested at his New York City home on Thursday and charged with a 1969 murder and the $6-million US 1978 airport robbery dramatized in the Martin Scorsese movie Goodfellas.

Vincent Asaro, 78, was named along with his son and three other defendants in wide-ranging indictment alleging murder, robbery, extortion, arson and other crimes from the late 1960s through last year. It accused Asaro of helping to direct the Dec. 11, 1978, Lufthansa airlines heist at Kennedy airport — one of the largest cash thefts in American history.

Asaro and his son Jerome, both alleged captains in the Bonanno organized crime family, also were charged in a 1984 robbery of $1.25-million US worth of gold salts from a Federal Express employee.

In addition to the heist, the elder Asaro was charged in the 1969 murder of Paul Katz, whose remains were found last year during an FBI dig at a house once occupied by James "Jimmy the Gent" Burke. Burke, a late Lucchese crime family associate, planned the Lufthansa heist.

Burke inspired Robert De Niro's character in Goodfellas, which was based on Nicholas Pileggi's book Wiseguy. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FBI agents escort reputed mobster Vincent Asaro from their offices in Lower Manhattan, New York, Thursday. NEWSDAY-CHARLES ECKERT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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NSA surveillance

Oversight panel says program is illegal, ineffective

The U.S. government's Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board warned Thursday that the National Security Agency's daily collection of Americans' phone records is illegal and ineffective and recommended that President Barack Obama abandon the program and destroy the phone records it has already collected.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Israel

Palestinians dismiss al-Qaida plot claim

Palestinian security officials on Thursday cast doubt on Israel's claim that it broke up an al-Qaida plot to bomb the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv, alleging Israel concocted the story to bolster its position in peace talks.

Israel's Shin Bet security agency says it arrested three Palestinian men over the plot.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Another male bastion falls

The pure, high voices of the choir have soared toward the vaulted ceiling of England's Canterbury Cathedral for more than 1,000 years. This Saturday, just one thing will be different — the young choristers in their purple cassocks, pictured above, will be girls, ending centuries of all-male tradition at the mother church of the 80 million-strong Anglican Communion. ALASTAIR GRANT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Is caramel colouring in pop safe? FDA vows to find out

Coke and Diet Coke bottles sit on a store shelf in Miami. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration says there's no reason to believe that the colouring added to sodas is unsafe. But the agency is taking another look just to make sure. The agency's announcement comes in response to a study by Consumer Report showing 12 brands of soda have varying levels of 4-methylimidazole, an impurity found in some caramel colouring. GETTY IMAGES

Is your password 123456?

Then it's time to up your game. Research shows most online passwords are too easy

Passwords are a nightmare to remember, but even so, we are incredibly bad at them. Research from password management company SplashData has discovered the majority of people undermine their security with easily guessed codes, and company CEO Morgan Slain highlights these failures.

The main trends are that short numerical passwords are continuing to show up, even though more sites are requiring stronger alpha-numeric passwords.

Everything needs a password these days, but how are we to remember them all?

One way to create more secure passwords that are easy to recall is to start using passphrases, short words with spaces or other characters separating them. It's best to use random words rather than common phrases. For example, "cakes years birthday" or "smiles_light_skip?"

Stop doing this!

SplashData found 9.8 per cent of users have the passwords 123456 or 12345678.

STEVE SMITH/METRO WORLD NEWS

How low can it go?

Loonie dives below 90 cents

The dollar closed at 90.10 cents US Thursday amid concerns about weakness in China's economy and recent comments from the Bank of Canada. Earlier Thursday, it traded as low as 89.35 cents US, the first time since 2009 the loonie has been below the 90-cent US mark. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR 90.10¢ (-0.09¢)

TSX 13,932.97 (-55.23)

OIL $97.32 US (+$0.59)

GOLD $1,262.30 US (+$23.70)

Natural gas: $4.83 US (+$0.13)
Dow Jones: 16,197.35 (-175.99)

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HAVE TO BE BUZZED TO BELIEB

THE METRO LIST

Mike Benhaim
metronews.ca

Firmly settled into the new year, with the brisk winter upon us, we watch our resolutions crumbling by the hour. There remains a buzz, no longer of holiday cheer or annoying relatives, but of social media exploding with up-to-the minute news that matters most. Here are some of the items trending highest in this week's Twittersphere.

1 **The puppy that lost its way.** This week's top hashtags were #JustinBieber and #DUI. People forget that this is just a normal 19-year-old boy, experimenting with drugs, sex and cars. Is it his fault he just happens to have access to the very finest of all three? But he'll be OK, because just like an adorable little puppy, he can poop right on your shoes, and look at you innocently, as if to say, "Wanna rub my belly?"#WeWillAlwaysSupportYouJustin.

2 **Dennis Rodman.** The surest way for a celebrity (and I use the term loosely here) to trend high is to check into rehab. But this former NBA bad boy was already under fire for his relationship with Kim Jong-un, and compounded it by going nuts in a satellite interview (from North Korea) with CNN anchor Chris Cuomo. Nothing gets folks a-tweetin' like a rant so incoherent, it's incomprehensible to two cultures simultaneously. What's the Korean word for "huh?"

3 **Hilton-grooven.** Her audacious claim that she was "one of the top 5 DJs in the world" ignited online controversy until Paris Hilton explained that she was merely one of the top five "HIGHEST PAID DJs..." What followed was a global DJ community left in a silent state of melancholy introspection.

4 **Really, Rob?** Toronto's mayor revived his dwindling buzz with footage of yet another drunken jabberfest earlier this week. Reporters were unable to focus on budget-related questions after seeing him rant in faux-Patois at the Steak Queen restaurant. So much for getting "enough to eat at home."

5 **Greatest game ever, dude.** The Super Bowl always ranks high in online chatter, but this year features Seattle versus Denver, and takes place in New Jersey, where constituents just re-elected Gov. Chris Christie. So it's hard to gauge whether trending is due to the NFL's huge fan base, or the fact that everyone is stoned. One thing's for sure: Announcers will have to speak very slowly.

6 **Tennis, anyone?** Eugenie Bouchard became the first Canadian to advance this far in the Australian Open, but apparently that's not as interesting as her crush on Justin Bieber, according to the latest Twitter trend #GenieArmy.

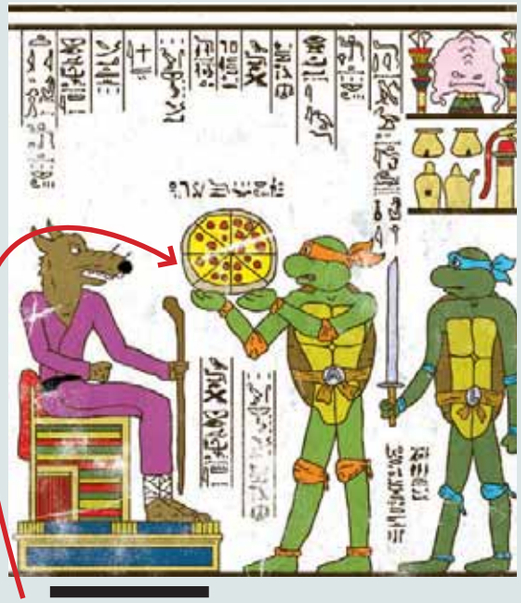
7 **In the wrong business.** Not on the list just yet, but on the topic of trends, iconic Canadian men's fashion chain Harry Rosen celebrates its 60th anniversary this coming month. I take a moment to reflect back on the memory of all of the contemporary brand-name fashions I was never able to afford, and still can't.

8 **Time well spent.** This week's highest-ranking online subject went to Oxfam's report that the world's 85 richest people have as much wealth as half of Earth's population. What they don't tell you is that it's because the bottom half spends the majority of their time tweeting and posting selfies on Instagram. The other 85 are shopping at Harry Rosen as we speak.

Follow The Metro List on Twitter @TheMetroList

ZOOM

Hero-glyphics are a Marvel to behold



COURTESY JOSHLANEDESIGN.COM

TV icons star in ancient artwork

An artist has transported superheroes into a world of sacred myths, by drawing them in hieroglyphics. In his series Hero-glyphics, Josh Lane blends our favourite TV and comic-book characters — from Star Trek and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles to X-Men (not pictured) — with the ancient Egyptian art form. METRO

Q and A

Accidental genius

JOSH LANE
Graphic designer and illustrator, 27, from Kansas City, Mo.

What was the inspiration for the superheroes?

I tend to read very fast, which is usually a curse, but one time I read the word "hieroglyphics" as "hero-glyphics." Immediately I started daydreaming about the possible hero scenarios and combinations.

In a world where the Egyptian gods could fight Marvel superheroes, who would win? Osiris and Anubis, or the X-Men?

The X-Men for sure, because they are a team. I could see the Egyptian gods fighting each other for power, leaving an opportunity for the X-Men to strike.

Clickbait

GETTY IMAGES

Deciding where you want to eat can be tough, even before those pesky hunger pangs kick in. So if you want to find a restaurant quickly, and also give the impression you are a gastronomical crackerjack, check out these apps.

Foodspotting:

This app knows that you eat with your eyes first. It lets you view photos of various dishes arranged by best, latest and nearest to you that have been uploaded by other patrons. Once you've found a drool-worthy dish, you can access the restaurant's info.

Open Table:

You can take advantage of your co-ordinates to find a restaurant and reserve a table. There are other auxiliary features such as searching restaurants by name, the interactive map, and you can also access restaurant info via a link to the site.

Vegout:

It lets you find vegetarian/vegan/vegetarian-friendly restaurants based on your location. The only drawback is it doesn't allow you to type in a specific restaurant.

Twitter

@metropicks asked: A stall with 2 toilets at a Sochi stadium has left many flushed. What is the strangest toilet set-up you have seen?

@nicolemartelle: 2 toilets in one stall (the stall connecting wall was torn down) in high school. fixed it after 2 days

@kokoskag: I have seen the double toilet set up in NFLD. Didn't look as nice as this though!

@strangerob: 3 seat thunderbox on several ftx, or possibly the latrine in Ft Lewis that had something like 6 toilets in a row.

@Dweller15: it's not new and not funny,take a look internet full of that crap

@beccawhite1984: that would be great if you have kids. They usually have to go at the same time.

Follow @metropicks and take part in our daily poll.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU:
Send us your comments: vancouverletters@metronews.ca

metro
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Synopsis

I, Frankenstein, Aaron Eckhart's martial arts update of the famous Mary Shelley story, wasn't screened for the press in time to meet our deadline, so after a long conversation with our editor the Reel Guys have decided to do a column on Eckhart's oeuvre. At least that's how we see it. Our boss has a different idea. "As your editor I demand a thorough dissection of Eckhart's abs," she wrote before adding: "More than pretty, Eckhart is." What follows is our humble attempt to mix cinematic business with our editor's pleasure.

Aaron Eckhart in a scene from I, Frankenstein. Metro's movies editor digs Eckhart's physique, but the Reel Guys say there's more to him than abs and cleft. CONTRIBUTED

Why we love Aaron Eckhart

Reel Guys

RICHARD CROUSE AND MARK BRESLIN

A-lister. He's got the acting chops ... and that cleft. So why isn't he a household name?

Richard: Mark, Aaron Eckhart isn't exactly a household name, but he has appeared in some very big movies. He's the only live-action actor in the Batman films to play both Harvey Dent and his villainous alter-ego Two-Face. The Dark Knight is by far and away his biggest hit, followed by his star-making turn in Erin Brockovich. But despite those box office busters we don't talk about the handsome actor in the same breath as A-listers like Cruise, DiCaprio or Smith. He has the above-mentioned abs and is versatile enough to star in everything from video game action movies like Battle: Los Angeles to hardcore dramas like Rabbit Hole and yet doesn't get the same recognition as many of his peers. What's your take on him?

Mark: You mean the cleft that walked like a man? I could probably fit my grad thesis in there! Eckhart exploded onto my radar with two films he did in the late '90s, both by the cynical playwright Neil LaBute: In the Company of Men, and Your Friends & Neighbors. In both films he plays despicable, almost un-watchably misogynistic men. The key word here is almost. As rotten as he behaves in these movies, there's an inchoate grace under the surface that redeems the characters, and it's a testimony to his acting skills that he can keep us watching. And that cleft.

RC: Some like the cleft, some the abs. I like his versatility. In a year span between 2010 and '11 he released three very different movies. In Rabbit Hole, he and Nicole Kidman were a couple trying to deal with the death of their four-year-old son. They are at different stages of their grief, but they share a couple of things: a terrible sense of loss and an inability to know how to deal with it. Terrific stuff. Next was the alien invader movie Battle: Los Angeles followed by The Rum Diaries where he played a slick PR person. Three different movies and three very different performances. Maybe we have a hard time defining him because he constantly does wild career flip-flops.

MB: Or because there's an opacity to him that allows him to play so many compromised characters, allowing us to project our feelings onto him. Look at one of his finest roles, as the tobacco lobbyist in Thank You for Smoking. He's so slick, so shifty, we don't judge him, precisely because we don't really know him. A quality that's great for an actor, but less so for a movie star. I really liked him in Rabbit Hole and Rum Diaries, too, but his mainstream work doesn't register with me as much. Except for his cleft.

RC: He's made a number of movies I wouldn't recommend for the big screen but work well enough as rentals. Two action films, Erased and Suspect Zero, are very VOD friendly and feature many cleft hero shots.

MB: Or two romantic comedies that would have been disastrous without him: No Reservations and Love Happens. He doesn't do nude scenes in them, though, because in close-up you couldn't tell if it were his backside or his cleft.

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Classics get reeled into the digital era

Great Digital Film Festival. Check out your favourite films in a fine new format

CHRIS ALEXANDER
scene@metronews.ca

Planet of the Apes is brighter and better than ever at the Digital Film Fest. CONTRIBUTED

With celluloid withering as the cinema-screening media of choice, the digital revolution is not only here to stay, it is — dare we say — superior to its sprocket-dependent predecessor. Purists be damned, with digital projection you don't get colour fades, melted frames, strip breaks or foreign hairs dancing in the corners of the screen.

If you want to watch your favourite movies and experience them in a state of rebirth, digital is quite simply the way to go.

The iconic exhibitors at Cineplex have embraced this change, hence the latest installment in their annual Great Digital Film Festival, returning Jan. 31 to Feb. 6 to select Cineplex screens across Canada.

Over 20 celebrated classics of cinema, from superhero gems to cult oddities to action blowouts are unspooling (so to speak) this round and while all are solid draws, Metro has selected a handful of pictures that are essential HD viewing experiences.

Planet of the Apes (1968)
It doesn't get much better than this retro-future shock masterpiece, in which Charlton Heston plays an astronaut jettisoned back to the primal future where simians hold court and humans are livestock and worse. A brilliant nightmare that spawned an entire subculture is exhibited here in a gorgeous, crisp transfer.

Brazil (1985)
Terry Gilliam's surrealist dystopian mind-bender has no peer, with kinetic visuals, wild-eyed performances (including a hilarious turn by Robert De Niro) and social commentary smashed into one mad, mad movie. A must-see.

Logan's Run (1976)
Join Michael York and Jenny Agutter as lovers on the run in a beautiful, abstract and distinctly '70s-centric future where the government allows each citizen 30 years of life before they are ritualistically executed. The film is a landscape of blown out whites and becomes an all-consuming environment on the big screen.

FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF FILMS, SCREENING TIMES AND PARTICIPATING THEATERS VISIT CINEPLEX.COM/EVENTS/DIGITALFILMFEST

Batman (1989)

Michael Keaton as Batman. CONTRIBUTED

Tim Burton's original venture into Dark Knight territory has aged beautifully — Prince music notwithstanding — and balances camp, noir and psychodrama with aplomb. Stylish and eccentric, with rich blacks, blues and browns that are deftly drawn out in digital.

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Penn State doc gets blessing

The filmmaker behind the new documentary about the Penn State sexual-abuse scandal says that both the family of Joe Paterno and the lawyer for the victims expressed satisfaction with the film.

"To have total polar opposite perspectives feel a sense of gratification that the film represents their perspective accurately is really something I am proud of," said documentarian Amir Bar-Lev in an interview at the Sundance Film Festival, where Happy Valley premiered.

Bar-Lev screened the film for Joe Paterno's widow, Sue, his two sons, Scott and Jay, and attorney Tom Kline before it premiered. All appear in the film.

Happy Valley explores the case that engulfed the town of State College, Penn., where Penn State is based and which is also known as Happy Valley.

Now a convicted serial child-molester, Jerry Sandusky, the former Penn State assistant football coach, was then accused of molesting children, and key people, including former head coach Paterno, were said to have turned a blind eye.

Happy Valley explores the case that consumed State College, Penn. CONTRIBUTED

Paterno died with a tarnished image and the town was rocked by their fallen saints. Jerry Sandusky did not speak for the movie, but his son Matt Sandusky did.

To get Matt Sandusky to agree to participate in the documentary, Bar-Lev assured him the movie wouldn't solely rely on the stories of Sandusky or Paterno, but would focus on the torn Happy Valley community. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Whitewash unleashes the cold

Deep freeze. Actor braved both a complicated character study and cornstarch storms for his new role

RICHARD CROUSE
scene@metronews.ca

Thomas Haden Church stars in Whitewash, which opens in Toronto and Ottawa this weekend. CONTRIBUTED

It wasn't the wind and snow that Thomas Haden Church found "punishing" when shooting the new psychological thriller Whitewash in northern Quebec, but the lack of it.

"You know how it goes," he says. "You shoot one day and it's the perfect conditions and two days later it's 50 degrees (10 degrees Celsius) and you have to figure out a way to make it match. We had blizzards and we had giant fans with cornstarch.

"When we started shooting there was a storm blowing in but as God would have it three hours later there's not a flake of snow floating through the air so they pull out the eight-foot fans and crank up the Corvette engines that drive them and start hucking cornstarch at me.

"It is still cold as all get out, and with those fans blowing sometimes you wish the blizzard would come back and they'd turn the fans off. Those fans will fling stuff at you at sixty miles an hour. Those things are punishing to stand in front of."

The cornstarch plays a crucial role in the film's opening and defining scene. During a whiteout snowstorm — enhanced with the white, fluffy thickener for extra effect — Church's character Bruce takes a wild, drunken ride on a bulldozer that leaves a man dead.

Unnerved, he hides the body in a snow bank and lams it to the deep woods to avoid police and clear his head.

"When I read it a buddy of mine who works with me said, 'You know, sometimes you read 'em and you know what you know. You gotta go.' I knew as soon as I read Whitewash I had to go. The challenges, the character, the uniqueness of the setting, the emotional complexity of what he goes through. There is tragedy but I think by the end of the movie there is this affirmation that everybody landed on the mortal coil where they were supposed to be."

Church is in virtually every scene and delivers an extraordinary, minimalist performance.

He doesn't appear to be doing much, but subtly rides the lines between sanity and insanity, between absurdity and logic, leaving the viewer off balance as the film veers between the present and flashbacks.

"Even as far back as working in television comedy as I did, I always wanted more nuance, more reflection, more moments of whatever the whisper line between comedy and drama is," he says.

"That really is defined by human circumstance and human behavior. Even when we were promoting this picture that I did called Sideways, we'd do these big Q&As and one time this guy said, 'It must be really interesting. In the dramatic scenes you make very dramatic choices and in the comedic scenes you make very comedic choices.' No man, maybe it sounds a bit elitist or pseudo-intellectual but I make human choices. I'm just trying to play a real guy."

Drama

Gabrielle

Director. Louise Archambault

Stars. Gabrielle Marion-Rivard, Alexandre Landry

Canada's entry for the Best Foreign Film at this year's Oscars, Gabrielle is the touching story of the title character (Gabrielle Marion-Rivard), a young woman with developmental disabilities who falls in love with Martin (Alexandre Landry), a singer in her choir. Unfortunately his mother doesn't approve and pulls Martin from the group in an attempt to end their relationship. In return Gabrielle takes control of her life for the first time. This thought provoking French language film is a tender tearjerker, but undeniably soul-stirring. **RICHARD CROUSE**

Action

Ice Soldiers

Director. Sturla Gunnarsson

Stars. Dominic Purcell, Adam Beach

Fifty years after the Cuban Missile Crisis, three genetically modified Russian super soldiers are found frozen (but alive) far in the Canadian North. These Cold War-era killers are on a mission to launch a terrorist attack on New York City, but the burly scientist who defrosted them is determined to make sure that never happens. It's not the preposterous premise, the half-baked plot developments, or even the clichéd characters that makes this film unbearable to watch, it's all of these elements combined.

REGAN REID

Drama/Biography

Devil's Knot

Director. Atom Egoyan

Stars. Reese Witherspoon, Colin Firth

Atom Egoyan's late out of the gate fictionalization of the 20-year-old true crime nightmare documented in both the critically lauded Paradise Lost movies and the Peter Jackson produced West of Memphis trots out the wrenching saga of the West Memphis Three with middling results. Far too ponderous, the film dulls down one of the most fascinating miscarriages of justice in American history but boasts first rate performances, especially in the performance of Reese Witherspoon as shattered mother Pam Hobbs.

CHRIS ALEXANDER

Documentary

Our Man in Tehran

Director. Drew Taylor, Larry Weinstein

Stars. Ken Taylor, Tony Mendez

For those proud Canadians seeking affirmation after Ben Affleck's Argo downplayed the role of Canadian Ambassador Ken Taylor during the 1979 Iranian hostage crisis, Our Man in Tehran aims to clear up the confusion. While its talking head-heavy approach surely gives a more rounded education on the entire mess (and many of the others involved), its revelations aren't exactly astounding. Still, the personalities are honest, engaging and straight to the point.

STEVE GOW

THESE PAGES COVER MOVIE START TIMES FROM FRI., JAN. 24 TO THURS., JAN. 30 TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

Dunbar Theatre
4555 Dunbar Street

Frozen (G) Fri 3:30-6 Sat-Sun 1-3:30-6 Mon-Thu 3:30-6
Her (14A) Fri-Thu 8:30

Fifth Avenue Cinemas
2110 Burrard Street

American Hustle (14A) Fri-Thu 12:30-3:40-6:50-9:50
Her (14A) Fri-Thu 12:50-4:10-7:10-10
Inside Llewyn Davis (14A) Fri-Tue 1:20-4:20-7-9:35 Wed 1:20-4:20-9:35 Thu 1:20-4:20-7-9:35
The Invisible Woman (PG) Fri-Thu 1-3:50-6:40-9:25
Philomena (PG) Fri-Thu 1:10-4-6:30-9:15

Pacific Cinémathèque
1131 Howe Street

Enemy (STC) Sat 6:30
Horses in Winter (STC) Thu 8:30
No Films Showing Today (STC) Tue
Rick Raxlen Shorts Program (STC) Thu 7
Sarah Prefers to Run (STC) Sun 6:30
Vic & Flo Saw a Bear (STC) Sun 8:30
The Visitor (STC) Fri-Sat 8:30
Visitors (G) Wed 6:30
Watermark (G) Fri 6:30 Mon 8
When Jews Were Funny (STC) Mon 6:30 Wed 8:35

Park Theatre
3440 Cambie Street

August: Osage County (14A) Fri 3:50-6:50-9:30 Sat-Sun 1-3:50-6:50-9:30 Mon-Thu 4:30-7:15

Rio on Broadway
1660 E. Broadway

Dallas Buyers Club (14A) Mon 9
Her (14A) Sat 4:30
The Shining (18A) Fri 11:30
Three Night Stand (14A) Sat 7 Sun 9 Mon 7 Tue 9
Tony 10 (STC) Sun 1:45

Scotiabank Theatre Vancouver 900 Burrard St.

American Hustle (14A) Fri-Sat 12:30-3:40-6:55-10:10 Sun 12:30-3:40-6:55-10:05 Mon-Thu 1:10-4:15-7:20-10:30
Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues (PG) Fri 1:10 Sat-Thu 1:30
Devil's Due (14A) Fri-Sat 1:15-3:55-6:10-8:25-10:40 Sun 12:55-3:40-5:50-8:05-10:25 Mon-Wed 2:20-4:35-7:10-9:45 Thu 1-4:35-10:30
Giselle From the Royal Opera House (STC) Mon 7
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug (PG) Fri 12:55 Sat 12:20 Sun 12:15 Mon-Thu 3:10
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug 3D (PG) Fri-Sat 3:30-7:05-10:35 Sun 3:10-6:40-10:10 Mon-Thu 6:40-10:10
I, Frankenstein 3D (PG) Fri-Sat 1-3:25-5:50-8:20-10:45 Sun-Thu 1-3:20-5:45-8:10-10:30
Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit (PG) Fri 2:40-5:15-7:50-10:30 Sat 12:10-2:40-5:15-7:50-10:30 Sun 12:10-2:40-5:15-7:50-10:20 Mon-Thu 2:10-4:45-7:25-10:05
Lone Survivor (14A) Fri-Sat 1:20-4:10-7-10 Sun-Thu 1:20-4:10-7-9:55
National Theatre Live: Coriolanus (STC) Thu 7
Ride Along (PG) Fri-Sat 12:35-2:55-5:20-7:45-10:20 Sun 12:35-2:55-5:20-7:45-10:15 Mon-Thu 1:15-4-6:50-9:30
The Wolf of Wall Street (18A) Fri-Sun 2:35-4:20-6:30-8:15-10:25 Mon 2:35-4:20-8:15-10:20 Tue-Wed 2:35-4:20-6:30-8:15-10:20 Thu 1:40-2:35-6:30-10:20

Esplanade 6
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American Hustle (14A) , , No Passes Fri 6:30-9:35 , Sat-Sun 12-3:20-6:30-9:35 , , No Passes Mon-Thu 6:30-9:35
Frozen (G) , Sat-Sun 3:40
Frozen 3D (G) , Fri 6:45 , , No Passes Sat-Sun 12:40-6:45 , Mon-Thu 6:45
Her (14A) , , No Passes Fri 6:50-9:45 , Sat-Sun 12:50-3:50-6:50-9:45 , , No Passes Mon-Thu 6:50-9:45
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug (PG) , Sat-Sun 4
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug 3D (PG) , , No Passes Fri 7:30 , Sat-Sun 12:30-7:30 , , No Passes Mon-Thu 7:30
I, Frankenstein (PG) , , No Passes Sat-Sun 3:30
I, Frankenstein 3D (PG) , , No Passes Fri 7-9:30 , , No Passes Sat-Sun 1-7-9:30 , , No Passes Mon-Thu 7-9:30
Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit (PG) , , No Passes Fri 7:05-9:40 , , No Passes Sat-Sun 12:45-3:45-7:05-9:40 , , No Passes Mon-Thu 7:05-9:40
Saving Mr. Banks (G) , Fri-Thu 9:15

Park & Tilford
333 Brooksbank Ave.

August: Osage County (14A) Fri 6:45-9:30 Sat-Sun 12:50-3:50-6:45-9:40 Mon-Thu 6:45-9:30
The Hunger Games: Catching Fire (PG) Fri 9:45 Sat-Sun 4-9:50 Mon-Wed 9:45
Inside Llewyn Davis (14A) Fri 7:20 Sat-Sun 1:25-7:20 Mon-Wed 7:20 Star & Strollers Screening Thu 1
Lone Survivor (14A) Fri 7:10-9:50 Sat-Sun 1:10-4:10-7:10-10 Mon-Tue 7:10-9:50 Wed 9:50 Thu 7:10-9:50
National Theatre Live: Coriolanus (STC) Thu 7
The Nut Job (G) Sat-Sun 12:30
The Nut Job 3D (G) Fri 7:15-9:20 Sat-Sun 2:45-5-7:15-9:30 Mon-Thu 7:15-9:20
Ride Along (PG) Fri 7:40-10 Sat 12:10-2:40-5:10-7:40-10:10 Sun 2:40-5:10-7:40-10:10 Mon-Thu 7:40-10 Star & Strollers Screening Thu 1
The Wolf of Wall Street (18A) Fri 8 Sat 12:15-4:15-8:15 Sun 12:30-4:15-8:15 Mon-Thu 8

SilverCity Riverport
14211 Entertainment Way

12 Years a Slave (14A) Fri-Sun 12:45-3:55-7:05-10:10 Mon-Wed 1:05-4:10-7:10-10:10 Thu 4:30-7:30-10:30 Star & Strollers Screening Thu 1:30
47 Ronin 3D (PG) Fri-Sun 10:40 Mon-Thu 9:55
American Hustle (14A) Fri-Sun 12:50-4:05-7:25-10:35 Mon-Thu 1:15-4:20-7:25-10:30
Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues (PG) Fri-Sun 4:20-10:25 Mon-Thu 4:20-10:15
August: Osage County (14A) Fri-Sun 1:10-4-7:10-10 Mon-Thu 1:10-4-7:05-10
Captain Phillips (PG) Fri-Thu 1:20-7:15
Dallas Buyers Club (14A) Fri-Wed 1:45-4:40-7:35-10:25 Thu 4:45-7:35-10:25 Star & Strollers Screening Thu 2
Devil's Due (14A) Fri-Sat 1:30-3:50-6:10-8:25-10:45 Sun 12:15-2:30-4:55-8:25-10:45 Mon-Thu 1:20-3:35-5:50-8:05-10:20
Frozen (G) Fri 12:05 Sat 11-12:05 Sun 12:05 Mon-Thu 1:25
Frozen 3D (G) Fri-Sun 2:45-5:25-8:05 Mon-Thu 4:05-7
Giselle From the Royal Opera House (STC) Mon 7
Her (14A) Fri-Sat 1:15-4:15-7:15-10:15 Sun 1:15-7:15-10:15 Mon 1-3:50-10:25 Tue-Thu 1:15-4:15-7:15-10:10
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug (PG) Fri-Sun 12 Mon-Thu 2:25
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug 3D (PG) Fri-Sun 3:25-7-10:30 Mon-Thu 6-9:45
The Hunger Games: Catching Fire (PG) Fri-Sun 12:25-3:40-7:05-10:20 Mon-Thu 1-4:10-7:20-10:30
I, Frankenstein 3D (PG) Fri-Sun 12:55-3:20-5:45-8:15-10:45 Mon-Thu 2:45-5:15-7:50-10:15
I, Frankenstein: An IMAX 3D Experience (PG) Fri-Sun 12-2:25-4:50-7:20-9:50
Mon-Thu 1:45-4:15-6:50-9:15
Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit (PG) Fri-Sun 12:10-2:45-5:20-7:55-10:30 Mon-Thu 2-4:35-7:10-10:05
Jai Ho (STC) Fri-Sun 12:10-3:30-6:50-10:05 Mon-Thu 1-4:10-7:20-10:30
Lone Survivor (14A) Fri-Sun 1:25-4:30-7:30-10:35 Mon-Thu 1:30-4:30-7:30-10:20
National Theatre Live: Coriolanus (STC) Thu 7
The Nut Job (G) Fri-Sun 12:15 Mon-Thu 1:05
The Nut Job 3D (G) Fri 2:30-4:45-7-9:20 Sat 11-11:30-2:30-4:45-7-9:20 Sun 2:30-4:45-7-9:20 Mon-Thu 3:15-5:25-7:35-9:50
Ride Along (PG) Fri-Sun 12:40-3:10-5:40-8:10-10:40 Mon-Thu 2:15-4:55-7:30-9:55
Saving Mr. Banks (G) Fri-Sat 1:35-4:25-7:20-10:15 Sun 1:35-4:25-10:15 Mon-Tue 1:10-4:05-7:05-10:05 Wed 7:05-10:05 Thu 1-3:50
The Smurfs (G) Sat 11
The Wolf of Wall Street (18A) Fri-Sun 2:20-6:15-10:05 Mon-Thu 2:20-6:15-10
WWE Royal Rumble - 2014 (STC) Sun 5

Dolphin Cinemas
4555 E. Hastings St.

Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues (PG) Fri-Thu 8:55
Frozen (G) Fri 4:30-6:40 Sat-Sun 2-4:30-6:40 Mon-Thu 4:30-6:40
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug (PG) Fri-Thu 8:30
Walking With Dinosaurs (G) Fri 4:30-6:30 Sat-Sun 2:30-4:30-6:30 Mon-Thu 4:30-6:30

SilverCity Metropolis
4700 Kingsway Ave.

47 Ronin 3D (PG) Fri-Sat 10:05 Sun 9:50 Mon-Thu 9:35
American Hustle (14A) Fri-Sat 12:50-4-7:15-10:25 Sun 12:25-4-10:10 Mon-Wed 12:45-3:45-6:45-9:45 Thu 12:45-3:45
Devil's Due (14A) Fri 1:20-3:40-6-8:20-10:40 Sat 1:45-3:55-6:10-8:20-10:40 Sun 1:05-3:25-5:45-8:05-10:25 Mon-Thu 12:50-3:10-5:25-7:50-10:10
Frozen (G) Fri-Sat 12 Sun 11:45 Mon-Thu 1:25
Frozen 3D (G) Fri-Sat 2:30-5:10-7:40 Sun 2:15-4:55-7:25 Mon-Thu 4:15-7
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug (PG) Fri-Sat 12 Sun 11:45 Mon-Thu 1:50
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug 3D (PG) Fri-Sat 3:25-6:50-10:15 Sun 3:10-6:35-10 Mon-Thu 5:45-9:25
I, Frankenstein 3D (PG) Fri 12:55-3:20-5:45-8:15-10:45 Sat 11-1:15-3:30-5:50-8:15-10:45 Sun 12:40-3:05-5:30-8-10:30 Mon-Thu 1-3:15-5:30-7:55-10:15
Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit (PG) Fri-Sat 12:10-2:45-5:20-7:55-10:35 Sun 11:55-2:30-5:05-7:40-10:20 Mon-Thu 2:15-4:50-7:20-10
Lone Survivor (14A) Fri 12:05-4:30-7:25-10:20 Sat 11:05-4:30-7:25-10:20 Sun 11:50-7:10-10:05 Mon-Wed 1:10-4-6:55-9:50 Thu 6:55-9:50
National Theatre Live: Coriolanus (STC) Thu 7
The Nut Job (G) Fri 1 Sat 11:15-1:25 Sun 12:45 Mon-Thu 12:55
The Nut Job 3D (G) Fri 3:15-5:35-7:50-10 Sat 3:35-5:45-7:50-10 Sun 3-5:20-7:35-9:45 Mon-Thu 3:05-5:15-7:25-9:30
Ride Along (PG) Fri-Sat 12:30-3-5:30-8-10:30 Sun 12:15-2:45-5:15-7:45-10:15 Mon-Wed 2:05-4:40-7:10-9:40 Thu 2:05-4:40-7:30-10:15
The Smurfs (G) Sat 11
The Wolf of Wall Street (18A) Fri-Sat 12:20-2:50-6:30-10:10 Sun 12:05-2:35-6:15-9:55 Mon-Thu 1:55-5:35-9:15
WWE Royal Rumble - 2014 (STC) Sun 5

SilverCity Coquitlam
170 Schoolhouse Street

American Hustle (14A) Fri-Wed 12:45-4-7:15-10:30 Thu 12:45-4-7:25-10:30 Fri-Sun 12-3:15-6:30-9:45 Mon 3:30-6:40-9:50 Tue 12-3:15-6:30-9:45 Wed 3:30-6:40-9:50 Thu 3:30-6:40-10:45
Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues (PG) Fri-Sun 10:05 Mon 9:25 Tue 10:05 Wed-Thu 9:25
August: Osage County (14A) Fri-Sun 1:10-4:05-7-9:50 Mon 1:10-4:05-7-10:30 Tue 1:10-4:05-7-9:50 Wed 4:05-7-9:50 Thu 1:10-4:05-7-9:50 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1
Dallas Buyers Club (14A) Fri-Sun 1:45-4:35-7:35-10:25 Mon 1:45-4:35-7:35-10:20 Tue 1:45-4:35-7:35-10:25 Wed 4:35-7:35-10:20 Thu 1:45-4:35-7:35-10:20 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1
Devil's Due (14A) Fri-Sun 12:30 Mon 1-3:55-6:10-8:25-10:45 Tue 12:30 Wed-Thu 1-3:55-6:10-8:25-10:45 Fri-Sun 3:50-6:10-8:30-10:50 Tue 3:50-6:10-8:30-10:50
Frozen (G) Fri 11:55-2:25 Sat 11:10-11:55-2:25 Sun 11:55-2:25 Mon 1:45 Tue 11:55-2:25 Wed-Thu 1:45
Frozen 3D (G) Fri-Sun 4:55-7:30 Mon 4:15-6:50 Tue 4:55-7:30 Wed-Thu 4:15-6:50
Giselle From the Royal Opera House (STC) Mon 7
Her (14A) Fri-Sat 12:20-3:40-6:45-9:45 Sun 12:20-4:10-8:45 Mon 12:50-3:40-6:45-9:45 Tue 12:20-3:40-6:45-9:45 Wed-Thu 12:50-3:40-6:45-9:45
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug (PG) Fri-Sun 12:15 Mon 12:30 Tue 12:15 Wed-Thu 12:30
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug 3D (PG) Fri-Thu 3:15-6:40-10:10
The Hunger Games: Catching Fire (PG) Fri-Sun 12:25-3:45-7:10-10:25 Mon 12:30-3:45-7:10-10:25 Tue 12:25-3:45-7:10-10:25 Wed 12:30-3:45-7:10-10:25 Thu 7:10-10:25
I, Frankenstein 3D (PG) Fri-Sun 2:15-5-7:30-10:25 Mon 5-7:30-10:25 Tue 2:15-5-7:30-10:25 Wed-Thu 5-7:30-10:25
Fri-Sun 12:55-3:20-5:45-8:10-10:45 Mon 12:55-3:15-5:35-8-10:25 Tue 12:55-3:20-5:45-8:10-10:45 Wed-Thu 12:55-3:15-5:35-8-10:25
Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit (PG) Fri-Sun 12-2:35-5:10-7:45-10:20 Mon 2:15-5:05-7:40-10:15 Tue 12-2:35-5:10-7:45-10:20 Wed-Thu 2:15-5:05-7:40-10:15 Fri-Sun 2:40-5:20-8-10:50 Mon 5:20-8-10:45 Tue 2:40-5:20-8-10:50 Wed-Thu 5:20-8-10:45
Lone Survivor (14A) Fri-Sun 1:50-4:45-7:40-10:35 Mon 1:50-4:45-7:45-10:35 Tue 1:50-4:45-7:40-10:35 Wed-Thu 1:50-4:45-7:45-10:35 Fri-Sun 1-4-7-10:05 Mon 4-7:05-10:05 Tue 1-4-7-10:05 Wed 4-7:05-10:05 Thu 4-10:05
National Theatre Live: Coriolanus (STC) Thu 7
The Nut Job (G) Fri 12:35-2:50 Sat 11:05-12:35-2:50 Sun-Thu 12:35-2:50
The Nut Job 3D (G) Fri-Thu 5:05-7:20-9:35
Ride Along (PG) Fri-Thu 12:40-3:10-5:40-8:10-10:40
Saving Mr. Banks (G) Fri-Sat 1:15-4:10-7:05-10 Sun 1:15-7:05-10 Mon 1:15-4:10-10 Tue-Thu 1:15-4:10-7:05-10
The Smurfs (G) Sat 11
The Wolf of Wall Street (18A) Fri-Sun 12-2:55-6:50-10:45 Mon 1:35-5:25-9:15 Tue 12-2:55-6:50-10:45 Wed-Thu 1:35-5:25-9:15 Fri-Sun 12:30-4:30-8:30 Mon 4:30-8:30 Tue 12:30-4:30-8:30 Wed-Thu 4:30-8:30
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Clova
5732-176th St., Surrey,

Free Birds (G) Sat-Sun 1:30
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug (PG) Fri-Thu 7

Hollywood 3 Cinema
7125-138th Street, Surrey

Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues (PG) Fri 6:30 Sat-Sun 2:10-6:30 Mon-Thu 6:30
Captain Phillips (PG) Sat-Sun 1:50
Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs 2 (G) Fri 4:30 Sat-Sun 12:10-4:30 Mon-Thu 4:30
Gravity (PG) Fri-Thu 9:25
The Hunger Games: Catching Fire (PG) Fri-Thu 4:30-6:30-9:20
Philomena (PG) Fri 7:20 Sat-Sun 12:30-7:20 Mon-Thu 7:20
Thor: The Dark World 3D (PG) Fri-Thu 8:55
Walking With Dinosaurs (G) Sat-Sun 12
Walking With Dinosaurs 3D (G) Fri 4:30 Sat-Sun 2:30-4:30 Mon-Thu 4:30

Strawberry Hill Grande
12161-72nd Ave, Surrey

American Hustle (14A) Fri-Thu 12:50-4-7:15-10:25
August: Osage County (14A) Fri-Thu 10:25
Devil's Due (14A) Fri-Sun 1:30-3:50-6:10-8:25-10:40 Mon-Thu 1:15-3:30-5:45-8:05-10:20
Dhoom 3 (PG) Fri-Sat 1:25-6-9:35 Sun 12:45-9:35 Mon-Thu 1:25-6-9:35
Frozen (G) Fri 12 Sat 11-12 Sun 12 Mon-Tue 2:35 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1 Thu 2:35
Frozen 3D (G) Fri-Sun 2:35-5:15-7:50 Mon-Thu 5:15-7:50
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug (PG) Fri-Sun 12:05 Mon-Thu 2:45
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug 3D (PG) Fri-Sun 3:30-7:05-10:30 Mon-Thu 6:40-10:10
I, Frankenstein (PG) Fri-Sun 12:55-3:20-5:45-8:15-10:40 Mon-Thu 12:55-3:20-5:40-8:15-10:30
Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit (PG) Fri-Sun 12:10-2:45-5:20-7:50-10:20 Mon-Tue 2:40-5:20-7:50-10:20 Wed 5:20-7:50-10:20 Thu 2:40-5:20-7:50-10:20 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1
Jai Ho (STC) Fri-Thu 12:40-3:45-6:55-10:05
Lone Survivor (14A) Fri-Sun 1:35-4:40-7:40-10:35 Mon-Thu 1:35-4:40-7:30-10:15
The Nut Job (G) Fri-Thu 1
The Nut Job 3D (G) Fri-Thu 3:15-5:30-7:45-10
The Smurfs (G) Sat 11
The Wolf of Wall Street (18A) Fri-Thu 12:45-4:45-8:45
WWE Royal Rumble - 2014 (STC) Sun 5

Studio 12 Guildford
15051-101st Ave, Surrey

12 Years a Slave (14A) , Fri 4:25-6:20-9:20 , Sat-Sun 1:25-4:25-6:20-9:20 , Mon 6:20-9:20 , Tue 4:25-6:20-9:20 , Wed-Thu 6:20-9:20
American Hustle (14A) Fri 3:50-6:25-9:30 Sat-Sun 12:45-3:50-6:25-9:30 Mon 6:25-9:30 Tue 3:50-6:25-9:30 Wed-Thu 6:25-9:30
Devil's Due (14A) , Fri 3:55-7:25-9:45 , Sat-Sun 12:55-3:55-7:25-9:45 , Mon 7:25-9:45 , Tue 3:55-7:25-9:45 , Wed-Thu 7:25-9:45
Frozen (G) , Fri-Sun 4:15 , Tue 4:15
Frozen 3D (G) , Fri 6:50 , Sat-Sun 1:20-6:50 , Mon-Thu 6:50
Girl, Boy, Bakla, Tomboy (PG) Sub-Titled, , Fri 4:30-7:20-9:50 Sub-Titled, , Sat-Sun 1:30-4:30-7:20-9:50 Sub-Titled, , Mon 7:20-9:50 Sub-Titled, , Tue 4:30-7:20-9:50 Sub-Titled, , Wed-Thu 7:20-9:50
I, Frankenstein (PG) Fri-Sun 4:40 Tue 4:40
I, Frankenstein 3D (PG) Fri 7:10-9:40 Sat-Sun 1:50-7:10-9:40 Mon-Thu 7:10-9:40
Ice Soldiers (14A) Fri-Thu 9:25
Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit (PG) , Fri 4:35-7:15-9:55 , Sat-Sun 1:45-4:35-7:15-9:55 , Mon 7:15-9:55 , Tue 4:35-7:15-9:55 , Wed-Thu 7:15-9:55
Jai Ho (STC) Fri 4-7-10 Sat-Sun 1-4-7-10 Mon 7-10 Tue 4-7-10 Wed-Thu 7-10
Lone Survivor (14A) , Fri 3:45-6:35-9:35 , Sat-Sun 12:50-3:45-6:35-9:35 , Mon 6:35-9:35 , Tue 3:45-6:35-9:35 , Wed-Thu 6:35-9:35
The Nut Job (G) , Fri-Sun 4:10 , Tue 4:10
The Nut Job 3D (G) , Fri 4:10-6:55-9:10 , Sat-Sun 1:10-6:55-9:10 Mon 6:55-9:10 , Tue 6:55-9:10 Wed-Thu 6:55-9:10
Ride Along (PG) , Fri 4:20-6:45-9:15 , Sat-Sun 1:40-4:20-6:45-9:15 , Mon 6:45-9:15 , Tue 4:20-6:45-9:15 , Wed-Thu 6:45-9:15
The Wolf of Wall Street (18A) , Fri-Sun 3:40-7:30 , Mon 7:30 , Tue 3:40-7:30 , Wed-Thu 7:30

Rialto
1732-152nd Street, White Rock

12 Years a Slave (14A) Fri 7:30 Sat-Sun 2-7:30 Mon-Thu 7:30
August: Osage County (14A) Fri 7-9:10 Sat-Sun 2:10-7-9:10 Mon-Thu 7-9:10

Criterion 4 White Rock
2381 King George Highway

American Hustle (14A) Fri 7:45 Sat-Sun 2-7:45 Mon-Thu 7:45
Frozen (G) Fri 7 Sat-Sun 2:10-7 Mon-Thu 7
Gravity (PG) Fri 7:30-9:25 Sat-Sun 2:30-7:30-9:25 Mon-Thu 7:30-9:25
Her (14A) Fri-Thu 9:15
Ride Along (PG) Fri 7:15-9:20 Sat-Sun 2:20-7:15-9:20 Mon-Thu 7:15-9:20

Colossus Langley
20090-91A Ave, Langley

12 Years a Slave (14A) Fri-Sun 12:15-3:30-6:55-10:15 Mon-Thu 4:05-7:10-10:15
47 Ronin 3D (PG) Fri-Sun 10:05 Mon-Thu 9:50
American Hustle (14A) Fri-Sun 12:35-3:45-7-10:10 Mon-Thu 4:10-7:20-10:25
Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues (PG) Fri-Sun 10:15 Mon-Thu 9:55
August: Osage County (14A) Fri-Sun 1:20-4:15-7:15-10:10 Mon-Thu 4:25-7:25-10:20
Devil's Due (14A) Fri-Sun 1:20-3:40-6-8:25-10:45 Mon 4:25-7:45-10:05 Tue-Thu 5:10-7:45-10:05
Frozen (G) Fri-Sun 1:45
Frozen 3D (G) Fri-Sun 4:30-7:15 Mon-Thu 4:20-7
Giselle From the Royal Opera House (STC) Mon 7
Her (14A) Fri-Sat 1:15-4:30-7:35-10:35 Sun 1:15-4:30-10:35 Mon-Tue 4:30-7:30-10:25 Wed 7:30-10:25 Thu 4:30-7:30-10:25 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 3
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug (PG) Fri-Sun 1:05
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug 3D (PG) Fri-Thu 5-9
The Hunger Games: Catching Fire (PG) Fri-Sun 12:10-3:35-7:05-10:20 Mon 4-10:30 Tue-Thu 4-7:15-10:30
I, Frankenstein 3D (PG) Fri-Sun 12:55-3:20-5:45-8:15-10:45 Mon-Thu 4:35-7:30-10:15
I, Frankenstein: An IMAX 3D Experience (PG) Fri-Sun 12-2:25-4:50-7:20-9:50 Mon-Thu 4:05-7-9:45
Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit (PG) Fri-Sun 12:10-2:45-5:20-7:55-10:30 Mon-Thu 4:55-7:35-10:30
Lone Survivor (14A) Fri-Sun 1:25-4:25-7:25-10:25 Mon-Thu 4:30-7:25-10:20
National Theatre Live: Coriolanus (STC) Thu 7
Nebraska (PG) Fri-Sun 12:50-4:10-7:05 Mon-Thu 4:10-6:55
The Nut Job (G) Fri 1 Sat 11:10-1 Sun 1
The Nut Job 3D (G) Fri-Sun 3:15-5:30-7:45-10 Mon-Thu 4:25-7:20-9:40
Philomena (PG) Fri-Sun 12:05-2:30-5-7:30-10 Mon-Tue 4:15-7:05-9:55 Wed 7:05-9:55 Thu 4:15-7:05-9:55 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 3
Ride Along (PG) Fri-Sun 12:40-3:10-5:40-8:10-10:40 Mon-Thu 4:55-7:35-10:10
Saving Mr. Banks (G) Fri-Sun 1:10-4:05-7:10-10:05 Mon-Thu 4:15-7:10-10:05
The Secret Life of Walter Mitty (G) Fri-Sat 1:35-4:35-7:25-10:20 Sun 1:35-7:25-10:20 Mon-Wed 4:20-7:05-10 Thu 4-10:45
The Smurfs (G) Sat 11
The Wolf of Wall Street (18A) Fri-Sun 12-4-8 Mon-Thu 4-8
WWE Royal Rumble - 2014 (STC) Sun 5

Cult favourite: The Following

Q&A. Shawn Ashmore talks serial killers, sweaty palms and the appeal of horror TV

ALEXANDRA CAVALLO
Metro World News in New York

The Following has so much more going for it than six degrees of star power (Kevin Bacon is the lead). The creepy-as-hell crime thriller about a serial killer and cult leader with legions of murderous devotees scares up all kinds of drama.

We spoke with Shawn Ashmore, who plays Bacon's fellow cop Mike Weston.

What drew you to this project? Are you really into horror movies?
I'm definitely a fan of horror films and genre films. The best horror films, at least in my opinion, are the ones that create great characters for the first hour and then deliver on the scares.

I love slow-burn storytelling when it comes to horror films. All of these things kind of came together and made me realize that this was a show that I would probably watch and something that I would want to be a part of.

I feel like there is a trend right now in dark TV, horror shows and the like. What do you attribute that to?
There's an audience for horror films, so certainly there will be an audience, especially when well done, for horror television.

I can't think of any other type of entertainment that physically involves you and stimulates you as much as horror stuff, as genre stuff — like when you can't stand to watch the TV, when you have a tingle running up your spine.

And when you turn the episode off and you go and double-check that your front door is locked because there might be a follower outside, you know what I mean? That's the effect of entertainment.

Do you ever find yourself bringing your work home with you? Hearing bumps in the night, or getting scared when you're home alone because your mind is on the show?
No. The stuff that scares me is all supernatural stuff, ghosts, possessions. Obviously the idea of someone breaking into my house and murdering me is terrifying, but I feel like I could protect myself to a certain extent from something like that.

So, really, it's the unknown that scares me the most. It's the supernatural. The second I finished the pilot, after doing a ton of research on serial killers and stuff like that, I did install an upgraded security system in my house, so I can't say that it had no effect on me, but yeah, it's not something I really get freaked out about.

Do you have a favourite serial killer now?
I won't say favourite, but I did watch a ton of documentaries on YouTube. I spent days watching. The one serial killer that got under my skin the most was Jeffrey Dahmer. He was just so evil. They all are. I mean if you commit those kinds of crimes ... These people were committing acts that — in my mind — I can only explain as evil. But Dahmer was one that really freaked me out.

I watched an interview with him once, when he was in jail, and what was scariest about him, to me, was that he seemed very charming and personable.
Some people have discussions about Joe Carroll (from The Following): You know, he's too handsome and blah blah blah.

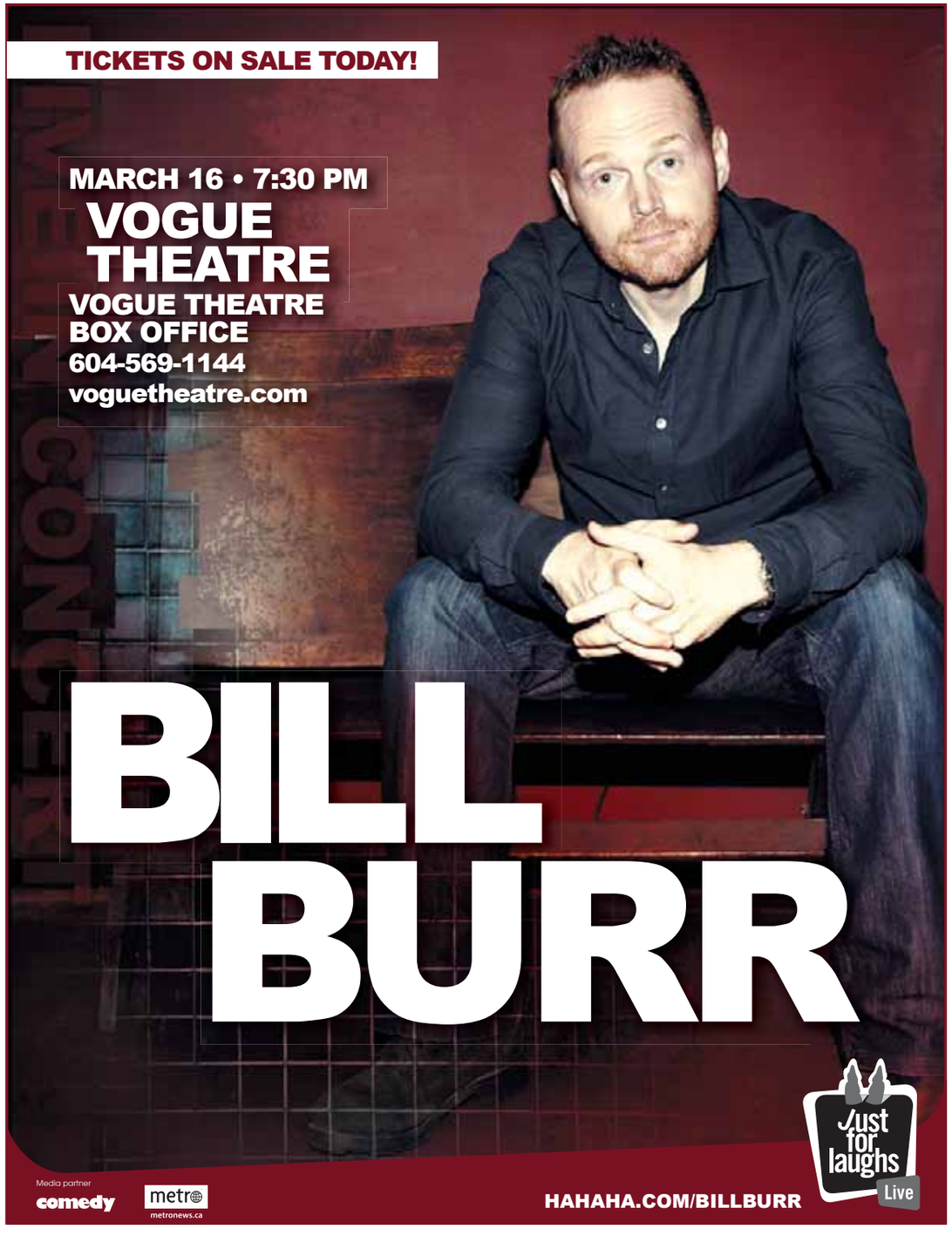
Serial killers are most effective when they're charming and handsome because they're chameleons. That's why they're successful, because you don't see them coming. I mean if you see a guy that looks like a madman running around, the second you see him, your guard is up, and those are the guys that get caught right away.

I think that's why we have this fascination with serial killers: because we want to be able to stop them and see them coming. But if they're good at what they do, if they don't fit that profile, that's what's scary.

Where to watch

The Following airs Mondays at 9 p.m. ET on CTV.

Shawn Ashmore plays cop Mike Weston on The Following. CONTRIBUTED



Grammys forecast is the usual mixed bag

Stunning with a heavy chance of excruciating. The awards show always throws up the odd mismatch on stage

PAT HEALY
Metro World News

When the 56th annual Grammy Awards air on Sunday night, the last thing millions of viewers will be focused on is the awards themselves. What makes the Grammys are the performances. The programmers know this, which is why in recent years they have featured fewer trophy presentations during the televised portion of the ceremony and more of their oddball pairings of performers. The results often vary from stunning to excruciating, which is why we always tune in. Here's what to look out for on Sunday night.

LL Cool J
LL is back for his third consecutive year as the host, and if the previous years are any indication, he also swings wildly between cringe-worthy — actually saying the phrase "hash tag" in front of everybody's name he mentions like a verbal tweet — and amazing, kicking it old school at the end of last year's ceremony with Chuck D, DJ Z-Trip, Tom Morello and Travis Barker. Also, if you're looking for a Grammys drinking game, if you take a drink after every time the host licks his lips, you'll be wasted before a single note-worthy award is given.

Pharrell Williams
The producer had his hand in two of 2013's mega hits, Robin Thicke's Blurred Lines and Daft Punk's Get Lucky, the latter of which he'll perform with everybody's favorite helmeted Frenchmen. With Nile Rodgers and Stevie Wonder also joining in this jam, you can feel it all over, especially as it's rumoured they'll go into Stevie's classic, Sir Duke. It will also be very surprising if you don't see Pharrell at the podium to accept an award at least once. He's nominated for seven of them!

Robin Thicke and Chicago
You guys remember Robin Thicke from the Video Music Awards? He was the one guy that Miley ground upon who wasn't dressed like a giant stuffed animal. Anyway, he's being given another shot at awards show glory, and this time he's sharing the stage with the legendary nine-piece horn outfit Chicago.

Imagine Dragons and Kendrick Lamar
One of the worst moments in Grammy history happened in 2006, when Linkin Park, Jay Z and Paul McCartney tried to create popular mashups that featured their music.

At that point, mashups were pretty much brand new and musicians were still figuring out how to accompany rappers. Eight years later, hip-hop and rock fit much more naturally, so when Imagine Dragons play their Record of the Year nominee, Radioactive — as Kendrick Lamar raps over it with Swimming Pool, from his Album of the Year nominee, Good Kid, M.A.A.D. City — it has serious potential.

Big sloppy rock ending
There's also no star in an all-star jam. It's kind of like an adaptation of the slogan that "there's no I in team." But in this instance it's not necessarily because of the giant egos on stage as it is the fact that when a ton of people plug in instruments and play together, it's just a mess. Earlier this week it was announced that Dave Grohl was curating the finale for the Grammys, which includes Nine Inch Nails, Queens of the Stone Age and Lindsey Buckingham of Fleetwood Mac.

Jay Z and Beyoncé
Yes, this will be beautiful, but wouldn't it be sublime if hip-hop's royal couple silently acted out a dramatic scene while Lorde performed her multiple nominee Royals? Seriously, think about how much that "you can call me Queen Bey" part would resonate.

Rapper LL Cool J will once again host the Grammys. GETTY IMAGES FILE

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Good Lorde! Taylor really is BFFs with just about everyone

MELINDA TAUB
Metro World News

Is there anyone Taylor Swift isn't BFFs with? She hangs out with everyone from sitcom stars like Sarah Hyland from Modern Family and to indie darlings like Lena Dunham to fellow pop stars like Selena Gomez. And now, apparently, she's added Lorde to her collection.

In a Rolling Stone profile, Lorde says she often texts Taylor for advice, even about something as minor as which knickknack to buy for her home. "Taylor's supergood at this stuff," the Royals singer says. "She's decorated her own houses for ages."

The two young stars weren't always so lovey-dovey — Lorde once told a reporter that she thought Swift was a bad influence. "Taylor Swift is so flawless, and so unattainable, and I don't think it's breeding anything good in young girls (who might think) 'I'm never going to be like Taylor Swift, why can't I be as pretty as Lorde?' That's bulls.," she said.

So how did the two end up BFFs? Because Taylor's a class act, pretty much, and sent Lorde a bouquet of roses when Royals hit No. 1. "I was floored," Lorde admits. Is there anyone Taylor can't win over? I really think she is laying the groundwork for a major showbiz power grab, backed by her cadre of female starlets of every stripe. And I could not love it more.

Lady Gaga ALL PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES

Big money lawsuits and disputes aplenty, just another day being Gaga

Lady Gaga is trying to keep some things secret, particularly a settlement with a former producer, which she's vying to have sealed, according to Radar Online. Producer and ex-boyfriend Rob Fusari filed a $30.5 million lawsuit against Gaga in 2010, claiming he helped transform Stefani Germanotta into the pop star she is today. The suit was settled out of court, with the details of the settlement sealed at the time, but now Fusari is being sued by another producer, Wendy Starland, who claims she also helped discover Gaga, and the discovery phase of that suit could unseal the documents from the first suit. "In 2010, Germanotta entered into a confidential settlement agreement with Fusari and Rob Fusari Productions, resolving certain disputes, unrelated to the instant action, that had arisen between them," Gaga's lawyer writes in the filing. "These documents include sensitive financial information that could inflict significant professional harm upon Germanotta if disclosed."

Mariah Carey

Mariah and hubby want to be Roc and Roe stars

Mariah Carey and Nick Cannon are working on a children's book. Scholastic announced Thursday that it has acquired the couple's Roc and Roe's Twelve Days of Christmas, a picture story scheduled for release this fall. Illustrated by A.G. Ford, the book is a holiday tale featuring twins Moroccan and Monroe, to whom Carey gave birth in 2011. Scholastic is billing the book as an "adorable" take on a famous Christmas carol. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Liquid Assets

Toast Burns and blends

LIQUID ASSETS
Peter Rockwell
@therealwineguy
liquidassets@eastlink.ca

Though not on par with Robert Burns, Anchorman Ron Burgundy's quote, "I love scotch, scotchy, scotch, scotch" is poetry to whisky lovers. Not like scotch needs celebrity endorsement. It's been rocking the spirit world for centuries with a cult of collectors who talk up their inventory numbers with the same relish that a tweeter does followers. And it continues to gain new members.

While single malts (made at a single distillery, in a pot still, from only malted barley) get attention because of big flavours, a scotch producer confessed to me that he felt "the art was really in the blend." Created from a combo of grain and malted whiskies, blends offer a rounded alternative to the aggressiveness of single malts.

Those looking for a tipple to toast Robbie Burns' 255th birthday this weekend might consider The Famous Grouse (750 ml, $28.05 - $29.99), the most popular blended whisky in Scotland. Smooth and lightly malted, its blend includes heavy weight single malts, The Macallan and Highland Park.

PRICES REFLECT THE RANGE ACROSS THE COUNTRY. SOME PRODUCTS MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE IN ALL PROVINCES.

TOTAL TIME 30 MINUTES

This recipe serves eight. MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Snack collision: Buffalo wings and nachos

Party food. These two classics team up for big and bold flavour

1. Heat the oven to 400 F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil and coat with cooking spray.

2. To make the buffalo sauce, in a medium saucepan over medium heat, combine the RedHot sauce, barbecue sauce and butter. Heat, stirring, until the butter is melted and thoroughly blended. Set aside.

3. Remove all of the meat from the chicken, cut into bite-sized pieces and place in a large bowl. Pour the buffalo sauce over the chicken, then toss well to coat. Set aside.

4. Spread the tortilla chips in an even layer over the prepared baking sheet. Sprinkle the cheddar cheese evenly over the chips. Using tongs or a fork, spread the chicken evenly over the cheese and chips.

5. In a small bowl, toss together the Mexican-style cheese and the blue cheese, then sprinkle evenly over the chicken. Top with the olives and scallions. Bake for 10 to 15 minutes, or until the cheese is melted and just starting to brown. Serve with salsa and sour cream.

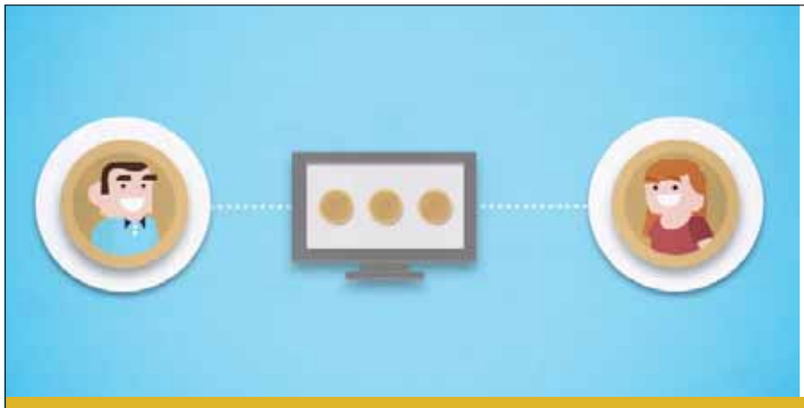
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FLASH FOOD

From your fridge to your table in 30 minutes or less

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup Frank's RedHot Sauce
- 1/4 cup barbecue sauce
- 1/4 cup butter
- 2-lb rotisserie chicken
- 7 1/2 oz tortilla chips
- 8 oz each grated cheddar cheese, Mexican-style shredded cheese
- 1/2 cup crumbled blue cheese
- 3.8-oz can sliced black olives
- 1 bunch scallions, sliced
- Salsa, to serve
- Sour cream, to serve



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NOTABLE NOW
Julian Brass, Founder of notable.ca, Canada's online source for young professionals

Hot Chocolate Festival

Check out the 4th Annual Hot Chocolate Festival and taste your way around the city, sampling 60 different chocolate-y creations. Know you're sipping for a cause, because this festival benefits the Downtown Eastside Women's Job Training Program of the PHS Community Services Society and East Van Roasters. Various locations, until Feb. 14.

Street Food City 3

Be sure to catch the third year of Street Food City, the original street food gathering, and sample more than a dozen tasty food truck offerings, all at The Vancouver Art Gallery (off West Georgia Street). Always a huge success, expect plenty of vendors on hand cooking up a storm. Score a seat, take in live music and enjoy a festive mid-winter outdoor feast. Well over 15 of Vancouver's food truck vendors will be on site and it's free entry. On Friday through Sunday from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Miura Waffle Milk Bar

Adventurous foodies on the hunt for something savoury, sweet and different need to make their way to this new spot. Family-owned and operated, this unique dining destination offers a variety of sweet waffle 'sandos' worth biting into, alongside flavoured yoggy milks and milkshakes. Guaranteed to give the traditional chicken and waffles a run for the money. (2521 Main St.)

Hot Stove Luncheon

Join hundreds of others, including special sporting celebrities, Toronto Blue Jays players and more, and show your support at this annual fundraiser luncheon. It's gloves off and time to dig into a succulent feast and silent auction with proceeds benefitting many local initiatives, including the operation of our Vancouver Canadians baseball league. $75. Jan. 24, Fairmont Hotel Vancouver.

GRIT: Scenes of South East Asia

Head to Photohaus Gallery and take in the opening reception of GRIT by the recent winner of The Capture Photography Festival and Georgia Straight's People's Choice Award, Christopher Edmonstone. Opening reception starts at 7 p.m. and goes late; show will run until Feb. 7. 14 West 7th Ave.

Go: Taste the World

Do not miss this stellar event that takes over the Four Seasons Hotel Tuesday with serious wine-fuelled style. Tickets are selling fast for this fundraiser hosted by the Canadian Friends of Medical Action Myanmar and Angkor Hospital for Children. Featuring a superb silent auction, fine bites from top-notch Vancouver restaurants, a wine tasting, entertainment and more. It's the 5th anniversary to boot. All the more reason to dish out $75.

A damsel's many a days without a knight

Katie Heaney, author of Never Have I Ever, has never had a boyfriend. Her book, which details her chronically single, sex-less life, has struck a chord with young people everywhere who know what it's like to be unlucky in love. Heaney talked to us about her book and the lessons she's picked up along the way.

Have you heard from people who are in the same situation as you? I've gotten a couple of hundred emails by this point. I've lost count.

Was it hard for you to write this book? I think when I was writing it I didn't know what was going to happen. It allowed me to be open and honest because there was no way for me to know who would ever see it. It was only in the last few months that I started to get more nervous about it.

Why do you think your book has gotten so much attention? I think it's something a lot of people relate to, not necessarily to the extent that I've been single, obviously, but no one's entire romantic life is perfect and so I think whether or not someone's dated a lot or a little they're able to still recognize there's this emotional dramatic anxiety about it.

You've dated since the book. What do you think changed? One of the guys I dated was maybe a year after the timeline of the book. It wasn't really a change. I just met him online and thought it was worth giving it a shot. It wasn't a thing where I realized I was doing something wrong. I was the same person — I just maybe decided to give it another try. METRO WORLD NEWS

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MLS

Salgado relieved to be injury-free

The dreaded two-a-day workouts: Ostensibly detested by competitive athletes. Bittersweet, however, for Omar Salgado.

Though difficult, they sure beat rehabilitating a recurring injury from the sideline for much of the last two years, which has been the case for Salgado.

The Vancouver Whitecaps' 20-year-old striker has recently been participating in the gruelling workout regimen in preparation for the start of training camp, which begins Saturday when players report for medical testing. On-field training begins Monday.

For Salgado, the beginning of camp represents an opportunity to continue his development in MLS after two separate right-foot fractures — one in June 2012 with a setback a few months later, and a re-fracture in spring of 2013 — have reduced his time to just seven regular-season matches in the last two years.

He had surgery on the foot last May, and didn't play a game the entire 2013 season.

"I just wanted to play," Salgado, the club's first-overall pick from 2011, told Metro in a phone interview.

"It's been a really difficult year-and-a-half being injured. It's something I never want to go through again. You really don't know when you're going to play again. I'm just glad I'm through it."

Alongside Salgado in the attacking third are 19-year-old Kekuta Manneh, 23-year-old Darren Mattocks and Kenny Miller.

CAM TUCKER/METRO

The Canucks' Ryan Stanton checks the Predators' Gabriel Bourque during the second period in Vancouver Thursday. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canucks fail to connect on power play vs. Preds

NHL. Vancouver offers weak offensive effort despite several good looks from close range

CAM TUCKER
cam.tucker@metronews.ca

Against the visitors from Music City, the Vancouver Canucks couldn't keep up their recent — and modest — winning tune.

In another low-scoring contest, Thursday's outcome was decided on special teams. When it mattered the most, the Nashville Predators made the most of a third-period power play, getting a goal from Nick Spaling on a deflection off rookie Seth Jones's point shot and ultimately defeating the Canucks 2-1.

Vancouver's penalty-killing unit came into this game tied for second in the NHL, operating at 86.5 per cent.

The offence has dried up this month.

Chris Higgins opened the scoring, deflecting a harmless-looking Dale Weise shot from the point up over Nashville goalie Carter Hutton.

On Thursday

Predators	Canucks
2	1

The Canucks, however, will lament one missed opportunity with the power play after another. In the first period, they had a four-minute advantage with which to take the lead and came away with nothing.

Not for lack of puck movement or purpose, but from lack of finish. Dan Hamhuis, situated at the bottom of the faceoff circle to Hutton's right, had about six golden chances on backdoor passes in two minutes, and didn't make a clean connection on any of them.

The Canucks continue this four-game home stand Sunday against the Phoenix Coyotes.

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4 SPORTS

Wickenheiser not buying into curse

Opening ceremony.
Hockey star embraces chance to lead Canadian athletes into Olympics

Hayley Wickenheiser in St. Pölten, Austria, on Thursday.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hayley Wickenheiser doesn't put much stock in the flag-bearer's curse.

The hockey star, who will carry the Maple Leaf into the opening ceremonies of the Sochi Olympics, says the idea that she and her teammates could be under any more pressure is absurd.

After all, they play a sport that many in Canada consider religion. So any sort of cosmic jinx pales in comparison to the weight of an entire country's expectations for the women's team to win a fourth straight gold medal in Sochi.

"I think there's just too much emphasis put on that," Wickenheiser said Thursday via conference call from Austria. "The country expects a gold medal. Whether I carry the flag or not, I'm pretty sure our team doesn't feel any extra added incentive that there's more pressure to perform, because we already feel that already."

Not all athletes see it that way. Diver Alexandre Despatie felt it would be a distraction and said he'd decline any offer to carry the flag at the 2012 London Games.

Kayaker Adam van Koeverden carried the flag at the 2008 Beijing Olympics and finished a disappointing eighth in the 1,000 metres — although he did win silver in the 500.

Moguls skier Jean-Luc Brassard blamed his disappointing performance at the 1998 Nagano Olympics on being the flag-bearer a day earlier.

Hockey Canada says the women will march in the Feb. 7 opening ceremonies despite playing their first game the following night versus Switzerland.

Wickenheiser is embracing the opportunity to put her sport centre stage.

"What I think it does is it shines a very positive light on the sport of women's hockey and just on our sport in general for the world to see," said the 35-year-old forward. "That's a great responsibility and expectation that every nation in the world has to carry in and I think should really embrace."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Pioneer of the game

Hayley Wickenheiser, who is at a pre-Olympic camp in Austria and wasn't able to attend the formal announcement Thursday on Parliament Hill, will be making her fifth Winter Olympic appearance.

- But for the first time since 2006, she won't be Canada's captain. Caroline Ouellette has been handed that job, while Wickenheiser will be an alternate.

World Cup bid

Soccer Canada's strategy: If you can't beat 'em, host 'em

Canada plans to bid to host the 2026 World Cup.

"We're the only G8 nation to not host the World Cup," Canadian Soccer Association president Victor Montagliani said on Thursday. "We've hosted almost every other event.... I think it's time for Canada to step up to the plate."

Canada has hosted FIFA youth tournaments and will stage next year's Women's World Cup.

CONCACAF has not hosted the Cup since 1994 in the U.S.

Canada made its only World Cup appearance in 1986 and is ranked 111th in the world, between Bahrain and Guatemala.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Boston	49	31	15	3	141	109	65
Tampa Bay	51	30	16	5	150	126	65
Montreal	50	27	18	5	127	125	59
Toronto	53	27	21	5	151	163	59
Detroit	50	22	18	10	127	138	54
Ottawa	51	22	19	10	144	159	54
Florida	50	20	23	7	120	151	47
Buffalo	49	13	29	7	92	142	33

METROPOLITAN DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Pittsburgh	51	36	13	2	168	125	74
N.Y. Rangers	53	27	23	3	132	135	57
Columbus	50	26	20	4	148	140	56
Philadelphia	52	25	21	6	141	152	56
Carolina	50	22	19	9	125	142	53
New Jersey	51	21	19	11	122	124	53
Washington	50	22	20	8	142	152	52
N.Y. Islanders	53	21	25	7	151	175	49

WESTERN CONFERENCE

CENTRAL DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Chicago	53	32	9	12	189	146	76
St. Louis	50	34	11	5	173	116	73
Colorado	49	31	13	5	144	127	67
Minnesota	53	28	20	5	127	130	61
Dallas	51	23	20	8	148	153	54
Winnipeg	51	23	23	5	144	152	51
Nashville	51	22	22	7	125	152	51

PACIFIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Anaheim	52	37	10	5	177	129	79
San Jose	50	32	12	6	161	123	70
Los Angeles	51	29	16	6	131	108	64
Vancouver	51	26	16	9	129	128	61
Phoenix	50	23	18	9	143	152	55
Calgary	51	17	27	7	114	161	41
Edmonton	52	15	31	6	132	183	36

Note: Two points awarded for a win, one point for an overtime/shootout loss.

Thursday's results
Carolina 5 Buffalo 3
Columbus 5 Philadelphia 2
Dallas 7 Toronto 1
Minnesota 2 Chicago 1
Pittsburgh 6 N.Y. Islanders 4
St. Louis 2 N.Y. Rangers 1
Tampa Bay 4 Ottawa 3 (SO)
Nashville at Vancouver
Los Angeles at Anaheim
Winnipeg at San Jose

Wednesday's results
Calgary 3 Phoenix 2
Carolina 3 Philadelphia 2
Detroit 5 Chicago 4 (SO)
Pittsburgh 5 Montreal 1

Friday's games — All Times Eastern
Ottawa at Carolina (ppd., scheduling)
Washington at New Jersey, 7 p.m.
Colorado at Florida, 7:30 p.m.
Montreal at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.
Nashville at Calgary, 9 p.m.
Phoenix at Edmonton, 9:30 p.m.

Saturday's games
Ottawa at Carolina (from Friday), 12 p.m.
St. Louis at N.Y. Islanders, 1 p.m.
Boston at Philadelphia, 1 p.m.
Colorado at Tampa Bay, 7 p.m.
Toronto at Winnipeg, 7 p.m.
Washington at Montreal, 7 p.m.
Buffalo at Columbus, 7 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Dallas, 8 p.m.
Anaheim at Los Angeles (Dodger Stadium), 9:30 p.m.
Minnesota at San Jose, 10:30 p.m.

Sunday's games
N.Y. Rangers at New Jersey, 12:30 p.m.
Florida at Detroit, 5 p.m.
Winnipeg at Chicago, 7 p.m.
Nashville at Edmonton, 8 p.m.
Phoenix at Vancouver, 8 p.m.

SCORING LEADERS

	G	A	Pt
Crosby, Pgh	26	43	69
Tavares, NYI	23	39	62
Getzlaf, Ana	25	34	59
Kane, Chi	23	35	58
Perry, Ana	27	28	55
Thornton, SJ	6	47	53
Kessel, Tor	26	26	52

Not including last night's games

NFL

PRO BOWL
Sunday's game — All Times Eastern
At Honolulu, Hawaii
Team Sanders vs. Team Rice, 7:30 p.m.

SUPER BOWL XLVIII
Sunday, Feb. 2 — At East Rutherford, N.J.
Denver (AFC) vs. Seattle (NFC), 6:30 p.m.

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
d-Indiana	33	8	.805	—
d-Miami	31	12	.721	3
Atlanta	22	19	.537	11
d-Toronto	21	20	.512	12
Chicago	21	20	.512	12
Washington	20	21	.488	13
Brooklyn	18	22	.450	14½
Charlotte	19	25	.432	15½
Detroit	17	25	.405	16½
Cleveland	15	27	.357	18½
New York	15	27	.357	18½
Boston	15	29	.341	19½
Philadelphia	14	28	.333	19½
Orlando	11	32	.256	23
Milwaukee	8	33	.195	25

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
d-Oklahoma City	33	10	.767	—
d-San Antonio	32	10	.762	½
Portland	31	11	.738	1½
d-L.A. Clippers	29	15	.659	4½
Houston	29	15	.659	4½
Golden State	26	17	.605	7
Phoenix	24	17	.585	8
Dallas	25	19	.568	8½
Memphis	20	20	.500	11½
Denver	20	20	.500	11½
Minnesota	20	21	.488	12
New Orleans	16	25	.390	16
L.A. Lakers	16	27	.372	17
Sacramento	15	26	.366	17
Utah	14	29	.326	19

d - division leaders ranked in top four positions

Thursday's results
Miami 109 L.A. Lakers 102
Denver at Portland

Late Wednesday
Toronto 93 Dallas 85

Friday's games — All Times Eastern
L.A. Lakers at Orlando, 7 p.m.
Toronto at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
Oklahoma City at Boston, 7:30 p.m.
Dallas at Brooklyn, 7:30 p.m.
New Orleans at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.
San Antonio at Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.
Charlotte at New York, 7:30 p.m.
Milwaukee at Cleveland, 7:30 p.m.
L.A. Clippers at Chicago, 8 p.m.
Memphis at Houston, 8 p.m.
Washington at Phoenix, 9 p.m.
Indiana at Sacramento, 10 p.m.
Minnesota at Golden State, 10:30 p.m.

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Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
There is no point being angry about what you have to leave behind. The planets are pointing you in a new direction and urging you to take that first brave step into the unknown.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Why are you so excitable? Whatever the reason, you will be on the go from dawn to dusk today. You may need to rest and get your energy back tomorrow but for now you are a ball of energy.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
You don't have to be especially dynamic today. In fact, if you wait for good things to come your way, they will. Also, your way with words will get what you desire in most situations.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Someone will come to you for advice and although you don't want to get involved, you know you can't turn them down. Make sure they know it is only advice. The ultimate responsibility rests with them.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Honesty is essential if you are to resolve an issue that has been dragging on. That does not only mean you being honest with others, it also means others being honest with you. Encourage them to speak up.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You tend to believe in only what you can see and touch. Something will happen today that makes you wonder if there are other forces at work. Can you make them work for you?

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
No matter how many brilliant ideas you have, they don't mean a thing unless you do something with them. For too long you've come up with grand plans, now it's time to act.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
There is a reason for everything that happens in life — ultimately there is no such thing as luck. Keep that thought in mind today and it will help you keep your feet on the ground.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Don't take it personally if a friend is overly critical. They are probably more annoyed with themselves than they are with you, but their ego won't let them admit it. They'll make it up to you tomorrow.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You may be desperate to be doing something more exciting but don't get so desperate that you act without thinking. If you do, and make a mistake, it will most likely hit you where it hurts most — in your wallet.

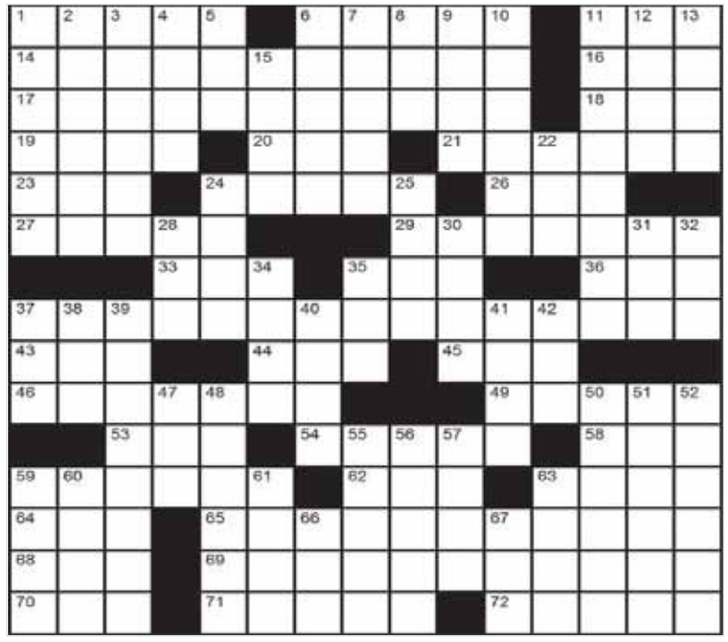
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
In the eyes of the world, you can do no wrong, so don't worry if you tread on others' toes. Most likely they'll say sorry to you! In every way you are moving faster than everyone.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You need to rediscover your passion for a project that started off well but tailed away as other things demanded your time. It doesn't have to be a fantasy that remains unfulfilled. There is still time to make it a success. **SALLY BROMPTON**

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

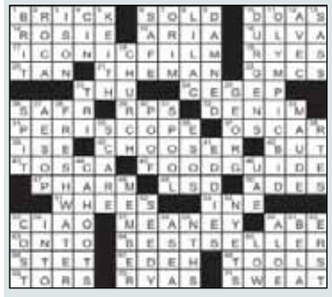
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Savoury gelatin
6. Motor scooter company
11. Book serial abbr.
14. 'Whale Music' Canadian band
16. Nightfall
17. MMA = Mixed __ __
18. Soak flax
19. City in Quebec
20. Atlantic Can. locale
21. Misters, in Madrid
23. "__, _ insist!"
24. Kiss of the Dragon (2001) star: 2 wds.
26. CBC's The __ James Show
27. "__ __ tired." ...said the exhausted person
29. Big bird
33. Web feed syst. for updates
35. Testing, testing One, __, three...
36. Dove's murmur
37. Canadian History: It was legalized on July 20, 2005: 2 wds.
43. Year: Spanish
44. Tellies
45. Nightfall in verse
46. Potato dumpling
49. Rover
53. Cdn. currency
54. My Own Private __ (1991)
58. Country music's __ Young Band
59. Fates
62. Numero __
63. Ms. Ward
64. Canadian broadcaster Mr. Lewis
65. Louis __ (British naval officer, Prince Charles' great uncle, b.1900 - d.1979)
68. Mr. Chaney Jr.
69. City near Toronto
70. Chang Bunker's equally famous twin
71. Literature's W.B.
72. Really promotes

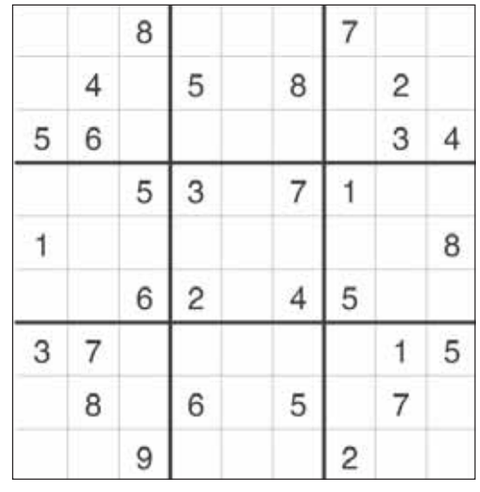
Down
1. Giorgio of fashion design
2. Canadian model/actress Ms. Harlow
3. Licence
4. Scintilla
5. _ _ _: Crime Scene Investigation
6. Parking attendant
7. Internet commerce, _-__
8. __ John A. Macdonald
9. Agent takes, for short
10. Declare to be true
11. Archie Comics character
12. Throughout
13. Net balls
15. Scotch stuff
22. Oslo's li'l locale
24. Ms. Stone of song
25. Cedar Rapids locale
28. Metal-bearing mineral
30. Hurting
31. Wheel part
32. Shed tool
34. Comedy's Mr. Meyers
35. Band-Aid, et al.
37. Decline
38. Journalist Ms. Curry
39. Fad jewellery piece in the 1970s: 2 wds.
40. Nero's 17
41. Casino city
42. Greek Myth: Odysseus' rescuer
47. Ending after . on the Internet
48. Dank
50. Join for company: 2 wds.
51. Make a claim about a crime
52. Singer Ms. Ross, and namesakes
55. Actress Kirsten
56. Pros opposites
57. Goblins
59. Leafy green
60. Shakespeare's river
61. French fabric?
63. Stick around
66. G8 country
67. Mountain __ (Type of tree)

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.



Yesterday's Sudoku

4	3	8	7	2	6	1	9	5
5	9	6	1	4	8	2	7	3
2	7	1	9	5	3	8	6	4
7	5	3	8	9	4	6	2	1
9	1	4	6	7	2	3	5	8
6	8	2	5	3	1	7	4	9
1	4	9	3	6	7	5	8	2
3	6	5	2	8	9	4	1	7
8	2	7	4	1	5	9	3	6

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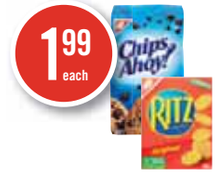

CHRISTIE COOKIES or CRACKERS Selected Types & Sizes

BOOST MEAL REPLACEMENT SHAKE 6 x 237mL Selected Types

CAMPBELL'S SOUP 284mL Selected Types
SIMPLY FOOD SOUP 284mL Selected Types - **59¢**

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BELLE COLOR HAIR COLOUR Selected Types

SECRET ANTIPERSPIRANT/DEODORANT (45g - 73g), **OLAY** or **SOFTSOAP** BODY WASH Selected Types & Sizes

NEOSTRATA or **CLINIDERM** SKIN CARE PRODUCTS Selected Types & Sizes
Excludes New Youth Factor

SWISS ARMY CLASSIC EAU DE TOILETTE (100mL), **CALVIN KLEIN** ETERNITY MOMENT (50mL) or **SARAH JESSICA PARKER** LOVELY (100mL) EAU DE PARFUM Selected Types
While quantities last. No rainchecks

AXE (355mL), **LIFE BRAND** DANDRUFF (420mL) SHAMPOO or **DOVE** HAIR CARE PRODUCTS Selected Types & Sizes
While quantities last. No rainchecks

LISTERINE MOUTHWASH (1L), **SENSODYNE** TOOTHPASTE (75mL - 135mL) or **COLGATE** MANUAL TOOTHBRUSH (2's) Selected Types

LIFE BRAND MOUTHWASH (1L), **COLGATE** MANUAL TOOTHBRUSH or TOOTHPASTE (75mL - 170mL) Selected Types
Excludes Premium

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